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After Shimla, protest in Mandi over illegal mosque

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SPORTS

Agarwal and Pratam give India A an edge

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Protest against Nagamangala riot: 40 detained in City

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

About 40 people were detained on Friday as they tried to protest in front of Town Hall here against the violence during a Ganesha idol immersion procession at Nagamangala town in Mandya, police said.

Some of them carried Ganesha idols demanding action against those who indulged in stone-pelting and went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles in the town on 11 September, they said.

"A group of people were proceeding to stage a protest in front of Town Hall but even before they could reach the venue, we stopped them as there was no permission to hold a protest there. However, they did not listen and had to be detained. About 40 of them have been taken into preventive custody," a senior police officer said.

A few people, including two policemen, sustained minor injuries in stone-pelting on Wednesday night in Nagamangala, police officials said.

According to police, an argument broke out between two groups, when the procession by devotees from Badri Koppalu village reached near a 'dargah' on Wednesday, and some miscreants hurled stones, which escalated the situation.

- Some of them carried Ganesha idols demanding action against those who indulged in stone-pelting and went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles in the town on 11 September, they said.

Following the clashes between the two groups, a few shops were vandalised and goods torched and vehicles set on fire on Wednesday night, they added.

Police used mild force to disperse the crowd to control the situation.

The group of youth that carried out the procession halted and staged a protest near the police station, demanding the immediate arrest of those responsible for the violence.

Cop suspended, 3 more held in Mandya violence

A police inspector has been suspended for dereliction of duty while three more people have been taken into custody in connection with the violence during a Ganesha idol immersion procession at Nagamangala in Mandya district. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2

Police take away Ganesha idol and detain activists amid protests over Nagamangala clashes, in Bengaluru, Friday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

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After 155 days, Kejriwal is finally a free man

SC says Kejri's arrest unjust, restricts him from signing files

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal walked out of Tihar Jail on Friday, hours after the Supreme Court granted him bail in the CBI case linked to the alleged excise policy scam holding that prolonged incarceration amounts to "unjust deprivation of liberty".

The court also held that Central Bureau of Investigation(CBI) must dispel the notion of being a "caged parrot", as the bail came as a major relief to the 56-year-old AAP Chief just ahead of Assembly elections in Haryana and months before in Delhi. It further observed that the arrest of Kejriwal by the CBI was unjustified.

Kejriwal, who was arrested on 21 March by Enforcement Directorate(ED) in the same case and later by CBI which was probing corruption charges, stepped out after spending 155 days in Tihar jail here. The AAP Supremo, who was earlier granted three-week interim bail in the ED case, was given a resounding welcome by his party leaders and supporters who were drenched in heavy rain.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addresses supporters after walking out of the Tihar Jail, in New Delhi, on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

> **This court had compared CBI to a caged parrot. It is imperative that CBI dispels the notion of it being a caged parrot. Rather, the perception should be that of an uncaged parrot**
> -SC

> **They thought that by putting me in jail, they will break my morale. My resolve and strength has grown 100 times stronger. The thick walls of the jail and the bars cannot break me**
> -Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi CM

Kejriwal is the third top AAP leader to get bail in the Delhi Excise policy case after former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh.

Notwithstanding the relaxation in bail conditions by a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan, which released Kejriwal in the CBI case, said he still cannot visit his office at Delhi Secretariat and sign any official file.

The bench retained only two bail conditions that he shall remain present before the trial court on each and every date of hearing, unless exempted and fully cooperate in expeditious conclusion of the trial. It decided to do away with the conditions that the chief minister cannot go to Delhi Secretariat, or sign files. However, the relief in the present case cannot be enforced as a bench headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, on 10 May and 12 July had imposed these conditions and made clear that they can only be recalled or modified by a larger constitution bench. Kejriwal will have to seek modification of these restrictions by approaching the CJI to set up a larger bench. The top court also imposed a slew of other conditions and directed that Kejriwal be released on bail upon furnishing bail bonds for a sum of Rs 10 lakh with two sureties of such like amount, to the satisfaction of the trial court *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2 & 3

PHOTO: PTI

4 jawans injured in Kishtwar encounter

JAMMU, 13 SEPT

Four army personnel were injured in an encounter that broke out following a search operation in Jammu and Kashmir"s Kishtwar district, officials said. Acting on a tip-off, security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Naidgham area in Chhatroo belt, police officials said. There was an exchange of fire between search teams of security forces and hiding terrorists at Pingnal Dugadda forest area, upper reaches of Naidgham village under the jurisdiction of Police Station Chhatroo, they said. *—PTI*

CONGLOMERATE DENIES CHARGE

Adani proxy's ₹2,000 cr frozen by Swiss authorities

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Swiss authorities have frozen Rs 2,610 crore held by a Taiwanese resident in multiple Swiss bank accounts as part of money laundering probe, suspecting he may be a frontman from the Adani group. However, the conglomerate denied the charge saying it was neither involved in any Swiss court proceedings nor any of its accounts are subject to sequestration.

US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research, which had last year targeted the Adani group in a damning report that led to wiping away of USD 150 billion in market value of listed firms of the conglomerate in the following weeks, in a post on X cited "newly released Swiss criminal court records", reported by a Swiss media outlet, as its information source.

Hindenburg claimed that criminal court records show in detail how an Adani frontman invested in BVI/Mauritius and Bermuda funds owned by Adani. The investigation reportedly froze five bank accounts of an alleged "straw man" for Adani.The Swiss investigators suspect that the associate, Chang Chung-Ling, is not the ultimate beneficial owner of the company under investigation, but a mere front. The name of Chang Chung-Ling had first surfaced in the 2023 Hindenburg report that alleged stock market manipulation, accounting fraud and money laundering at Adani Group. He was alleged to have made profits by buying and selling Adani stocks through offshore funds and that he was the sole director of Growmore, a shell company based in Mauritius used to siphon off funds. According to Hindenburg, Growmore netted an overnight USD 423 million gain through a stock merger with Adani Power.

As many as seven Adani group stocks ended lower on Friday *—PTI*

Gautam Adani **PHOTO: PTI**

To shed colonial legacy, Port Blair renamed Vijaya Puram

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The government has decided to rename Port Blair as Sri Vijaya Puram, Union Home minister Amit Shah announced on Friday.

Port Blair is the capital city of the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Shah also said that the decision has been taken to free the nation from the colonial imprints as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have an "unparalleled place" in the country's freedom struggle and history.

Shah said while the earlier name had a colonial legacy, Sri Vijaya Puram symbolises the victory achieved in India's freedom struggle and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands' unique role in it.

He said the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have an "unparalleled place" in the freedom struggle and history, and the island territory that once served as the naval base of the Chola Empire is now poised to be the critical base for India's strategic and development aspirations.

"It is also the place that hosted the first unfurling of our Tiranga by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Ji and also the cellular jail in which Veer Savarkar Ji and other freedom fighters struggled for an independent nation," he said. *—PTI*

Troops disengaged in 4 areas in Ladakh: China

BEIJING, 13 SEPT

Highlighting that troops have disengaged at four places in Eastern Ladakh, including Galwan Valley, the Chinese Foreign Ministry on Friday said India and China have agreed during their meeting in Russia to work together to create conditions for the improvement of bilateral relations.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks on the sidelines of a meeting of the BRICS high-ranking officials responsible for security matters in St Petersburg in Russia on Thursday where they discussed the progress made in the recent consultations on border issues, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a press release.

Asked whether the two countries were close to a breakthrough to revive the bilateral ties frozen for over four years due to the military standoff in Eastern Ladakh, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing on Friday that the two militaries realised disengagement in four areas and the situation along the border is stable.

The Indian and Chinese militaries have been locked in a standoff since May 2020 and a full resolution of the border row has not yet been achieved though the two sides have disengaged from a number of friction points. *—PTI*

RG KAR IMPASSE

Agitating docs write to Prez; seek intervention

Agitators take cover during rains as doctors continue 'cease work' against RG Kar Hospital incident in Kolkata on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

KOLKATA, 13 SEPT

Agitating junior doctors in West Bengal have written to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting their intervention in the RG Kar hospital impasse.

Copies of the four-page letter written by the West Bengal Junior Doctors' Front were also sent to Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar and Union Health Minister JP Nadda. A post-graduate trainee was raped and murdered in state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on 9 August. Junior doctors have been on 'cease work' since then. "We place the issues before you, so that our unfortunate colleague shall receive justice, and so that we, the healthcare professionals in West Bengal, may be able to discharge our duties without fear and apprehension," they said. *—PTI*

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₹2L aid to 29 who died during medics' protest

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that the state government would pay a compensation of Rs 2 lakh to the families of each of the 29 people who died after not getting treatment due to the 'cease work' of agitating junior doctors. "It is sad that we have lost 29 lives due to disruption in health services because of long-drawn cease work by junior doctors," Banerjee posted on X. *—PTI*

INDIA TEST FIRES 2 SURFACE TO AIR MISSILES IN 2 DAYS

BALASORE, 13 SEPT

India on Friday successfully test-fired the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VLSRSAM) for the second consecutive day from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur on the Odisha coast, defence sources said.

A statement from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) confirmed that both tests on 12 and 13 September were successful. The missile showcased its precision and capability to neutralise targets, the statement said. For safety reasons, the Balasore district administration temporarily relocated 3,100 residents from six villages within 2.5 km radius of ITR Launch Pad 3. This follows the earlier test on Thursday when the VLSRSAM missile effectively engaged another low-altitude target. These consecutive tests not only demonstrate the weapon system's reliability but also validate the recent upgrades made to various components of the system. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

HOPE FOR THE WORLD

WHO grants 1st mpox vaccine approval

GENEVA, 13 SEPT

World Health Organisation on Friday said it has granted its first authorisation for use of a vaccine against mpox in adults, calling it an important step toward fighting the disease in Africa and beyond.

The pre-qualification of the vaccine by Bavarian Nordic A/S means that donors like GAVI the Vaccine Alliance and UNICEF can buy it. But supplies are limited because there's only a single manufacturer.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for "urgent" scale-up of procurement, donations and rollout to get the vaccine where it is needed most, along with other response measures.

PHOTO: PTI

Under the WHO authorisation, the vaccine can be administered in people aged 18 or above in a two-dose regimen. The approval says that while the vaccine is not currently licensed for those under 18 years old, it may be used in infants, children and adolescents "in outbreak settings where the benefits of vaccination outweigh the potential risks". Officials at the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said last month that nearly 70 per cent of cases in Congo — the country hardest hit by mpox — are in children younger than 15, who also accounted for 85 per cent of deaths. On Thursday, the Africa CDC said 107 new deaths and 3,160 new cases had been recorded in the past week, just a week after it and WHO launched a continental response plan.

Mpox belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox but causes milder symptoms like fever, chills and body aches. People with more serious cases can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Court extends Darshan's custody till 17 Sept

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

A court here on Friday extended till 17 September the judicial custody of Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa along with his friend Pavithra Gowda and others, who are accused in the Renukaswamy murder case. All the 17 accused, including Darshan and Pavithra, were produced before the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court through video conferencing from various prisons across the State, where they are lodged, as their judicial custody ended today. The 47-year-old actor is currently lodged in Ballari prison. *—PTI*

5 motorcycles, auto gutted in Ejjipura

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Five motorcycles and an autorickshaw were gutted after a fire broke out at Viveknagar in Ejjipura on Thursday night. The fire spread to a nearby electric pole, causing the wires to catch fire. The blaze broke out around 11.30pm when the staff at a local kebab shop were installing a cylinder which caught fire. In panic, they threw the cylinder onto the road which landed inside a parked autorickshaw. The flames later spread to five other vehicles. Speaking to **Salar News**, a fire station official said, "It is suspected that the cylinder may have been sourced from illegal refilling operations, as cylinders are generally less likely to ignite easily." *—Salar News*

2 held for killing woman over debt repayment

KOLAR, 13 SEPT

Two people were arrested for allegedly killing a 45-year-old woman over paying back the Rs 30 lakh borrowed from her, near Malur in Kolar district. Timme Gowda and Muniyappa became friends while serving punishment at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in Bengaluru. They killed Lakshamamma, 45, and dumped her body on the roadside to give the impression that she was killed in an accident. On 7 September, police were informed of a body on the road near Hungenahalli in the taluk. *—Salar News*

Cop suspended, 3 more held for Mandya violence

Total number of people held in the case now stands at 55

NAGAMANGALA, 13 SEPT

A police inspector has been suspended for dereliction of duty while three more people have been taken into custody in connection with the violence during a Ganesh idol immersion procession at Nagamangala in Mandya district.

The situation in the town, where clashes broke out between two groups following which mobs went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles leading to tension on Wednesday night, has returned to normal, police said on Friday.

Though the situation remains peaceful, additional police forces continued to be deployed in the town, where prohibitory orders banning assembly of more than four people have been imposed till Saturday as a precautionary measure.

With the fresh arrests, the total number of people held in the case now stands at 55. Those 52 people who were initially arrested have been sent to judicial custody for 14 days, police officials said. As many as 18 FIRs have been registered in connection with the incident, police said. A team of forensic and fingerprint experts visited the crime scenes and collected the evidence for using petrol bombs to torch shops and vehicles.

Police Inspector Ashok Kumar posted at Nagamangala town police station was suspended on Thursday evening for dereliction of duty in connection with the clashes that broke out during the procession, Mandya Superintendent of Police, Mallikarjun Baldandi said.

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee Spokesperson M Lakshman urged State government to book cases against BJP leaders R Ashoka, BY Vijayendra, CT Ravi and C N Ashwath Narayan invoking charges under Goonda Act for provoking communal clashes. Udupi-Chikkamagalur MP Kota Srinivas Poojary has accused the Karnataka government of implementing an "invisible strategy" to curb Hindu festivals. Meanwhile, BJP on Friday constituted a five member "fact finding committee" on the violence.

—Salar News with Agencies

Police shifting a Ganesha idol from people who were protesting against Nagamangala riot in Bengaluru on Friday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Oppn slams Cong's 'appeasement politics'

NAGAMANGALA, 13 SEPT

BJP and JD(S) leaders said the violence during the procession was "pre-planned", as they hit out at "appeasement politics" of the Congress government.

Union Minister and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy, visited Nagamangala on Friday and said it emerged from on-spot inspection that prima facie the violence was "systematically pre-planned".

Hitting out at Parameshwara for terming the incident as "minor" , Kumaraswamy said: "What kind of message are you sending out to the people....you are calling it accidental...when such a procession was taking place and it was a sensitive area if adequate measures were taken, such an incident wouldn't have happened, shops of people who have been living here for 30-40 years have been torched." Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said, looking at the developments it looks like it was "premeditated". BJP MP Tejasvi Surya said whenever Congress came to power "Tipu and Aurangazeb's offsprings germinate, and they get strength." *—PTI*

ON ALERT

Mpox: KIA steps up surveillance

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

After India reported its first Mpox confirmed case, Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru has stepped up its surveillance. Health Department officials posted at the airport are monitoring passengers arriving from countries where monkey pox cases have been reported.

Flyers displaying symptoms such as rashes, fever, severe headaches, back pain and muscle cramps will be tested and advised to self-isolate. A surveillance officer has been appointed at the airport to oversee the screening.

Meanwhile, health workers in the State are receiving training to identify, track, and test for Mpox under the supervision of a task force led by experts, as outlined by Harsh Gupta, Principal Secretary of Health. The Health Department has instructed Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to send samples of suspected mpox cases to designated laboratories for testing. If a patient tests positive, they will be quarantined for 21 days.

Health Department has dedicated two isolation beds in all district and taluk hospitals, as well as in public healthcare and community centres.

—Salar News

PHOTO: X@UPUKNEWS1

When should you get tested for Mpox?

- Rashes on mouth, hands, feet, perianal area or genitals
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Headache, muscle ache, backache, fever and fatigue

Source of infection

- Coming in close contact with someone who has Mpox through, touching, talking, breathing, kissing and sex
- From contaminated bedding, towels, clothing, surfaces and other objects

e-Khata implementation postponed due to glitches

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

The new property registration system in the jurisdiction of Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) which has to be implemented from Friday has been delayed due to technical issues.

According to the new system, an e-Khata (property identification number) is a must to register a property in BDA or privately approved layouts in the City.

Top BDA officials told Salar News that certain modalities and technical glitches had to be worked out and the e-Khata will be introduced shortly.

A leading property lawyer who did not wish to be named said the new rule will curb illegal transactions and will ensure buyers' interests.

e-Khata, a computerised version of a Khata, has details like the name of the property owner, location, area and property tax details. Anyone can file for it online by logging on to BBMP's official website. e-Khata is to be used for all transactions on Kaveri-2 software of the Department of Stamps And Registration.

- According to the new system, an e-Khata (property identification number) is a must to register a property in BDA or privately approved layouts in the City

The requirement applies to both BDA-developed properties and private layouts approved by BDA within its jurisdiction. Developers working on new projects or forming new layouts must comply with these legal requirements to secure plan approval and subsequently obtain an e-Khata.

e-Khatas has already been implemented for property registration under Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department's jurisdiction and for agricultural land registration under Bhoomi system. Now, this is being extended to properties within BDA limits. *—Salar News*

2,000 houses to be built for Dalits, says Minister

MYSURU, 13 SEPT

Social Welfare and District In-charge Minister HC Mahadevappa on Friday said his government would give houses to Dalits in Ashokapuram by building a township with all the basic facilities inside or on the City's outskirts.

Once the government gets a suitable land, the houses for Ashokapuram natives will be distributed, the minister said. The government will also release funds for development works in Ashokapuram, Mahadevappa said after taking part in 112th Amba Puja organised by Doddagaradi-Chikkagaradi Sangha at Dr BR Ambedkar Community Hall in the city.

The minister said in his recent visit to New Delhi, he met AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge and conveyed to him about building 2,000 houses for Dalits living in Kalaburagi, the home district of the AICC President.

—Salar News

ONAM CELEBRATION

Keralites make 'Pookalam' as they celebrate Onam, in Bengaluru on Friday. Onam is on 15 September *PHOTO: SALAR*

Tejasvi criticises RaGa for anti-India remarks in the US

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

BJP MP Tejasvi Surya has strongly criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of aligning with individuals and groups hostile to India. In a press conference on Friday, Surya condemned Gandhi's recent remarks during his US visit, arguing that they have emboldened India's adversaries.

Surya alleged that Gandhi's comments were riddled with misinformation and suggested they provided a platform for anti-India elements.

Tejasvi Surya *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

"Gandhi's friends abroad seem to be India's enemies," Surya claimed, adding that Gandhi's international narrative was inconsistent with his domestic rhetoric. "In India, Gandhi accuses BJP of ending reservations and doing injustice to OBCs, SCs, and STs. But abroad, he speaks in English to an audience that doesn't hear these claims," Surya said.

Recalling Congress party's stance on reservations, he pointed out that Rajiv Gandhi, former prime minister and Rahul's father, had strongly opposed the Mandal Commission's recommendations in the 1990s.

Meanwhile, reacting to the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah telling BJP that their protest against Rahul Gandhi's anti-reservation remarks is like the butcher protesting against animal cruelty, Leader of the Opposition in Assembly and former Deputy Chief Minister R Ashoka said the devil can't preach. He was reacting to a social media post by Siddaramaiah, in which the Chief Minister took a swipe at BJP leaders for their anti-reservation sentiments.

—Salar News with Agencies

Kejri's bail confirms faith in judiciary: CM

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah lauded the decision of the Supreme Court to grant bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in a corruption case in the alleged excise policy scam stating that it has further confirmed faith in the country's judiciary.

On X Siddaramaiah said, "The Supreme Court order granting bail to the Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal and releasing him from jail has further confirmed our faith in the country's judiciary. This order gives hope to all those fighting for truth and justice."

He further hit out at the BJP and alleged it of misusing the constitutional institutions.

"This order of the Supreme Court is a rebuke to the central BJP government, which is misusing the constitutional institutions for their political nemesis. Let the Narendra Modi-led government, which has descended into politics of hatred, learn a lesson from this court order and wake up. Ultimately truth will prevail, justice will prevail. Satyameva Jayate," Siddaramaiah said.

Meanwhile, after High Court completed hearing and reserved its verdict on his petition challenging legality of Governor's approval for investigation against him in a site allotment case, he said he is confident of getting justice. Terming as "false" the allegations against him in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority sca, he asserted that he will do no wrong in the future too, and that his life was an open book. *—ANI*

CHARGESHEET FILED AGAINST PRAJWAL IN SECOND CASE

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Bengaluru police has filed a chargesheet in the second case registered against former MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual assault, in a special court here.

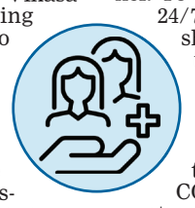
Revanna is currently under judicial custody at Parappana Agrahara Jail here, and a Special Investigation Team is probing four separate cases against him, officials said on Friday.

According to police, the second case against Prajwal Revanna was filed by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on 1 May after a 44-year-old former member of the Hassan Zilla Panchayat accused him of repeatedly raping her. *—PTI*

AI enabled security system to enhance women safety

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

In a decisive move to enhance the safety of women healthcare personnel across State, Minister for Medical Education & Skill Development, Sharan Prakash Patil, the chaired a high-level meeting on Friday at Vikasa Soudha. The meeting focused on measures to improve security at medical colleges, hospitals, and hostels.



The initiative follows a prior meeting led by Patil to evaluate current security systems and propose improvements. During the recent meeting, Patil underscored the importance of incorporating feedback from women healthcare professionals and other stakeholders. He stated, "Directors of medical institutions must collect feedback in writing and take concrete steps to implement necessary measures. A security audit committee should be established, with monthly meetings to review safety protocols. Additionally, thorough background checks must be conducted for all security personnel. To further ensure safety, 24/7 canteen facilities should be available so that women healthcare staff do not need to leave the premises."

Plans are underway to install additional CCTV cameras, improve street lighting, and create separate duty rooms and restrooms for male and female staff. The security system will also be enhanced through the integration of AI technology to provide comprehensive protection across medical campuses. *—Salar News*

Simha says won't permit Mahisha Dasara celebrations

MYSURU, 13 SEPT

Former BJP MP Pratap Simha announced on Friday that he will not permit the Mahisha Dasara celebrations, stating that they are inconsistent with the traditional Naada Habba Dasara celebrations.

Speaking to the media, Simha asserted that regardless of his status as a former MP, he will not allow such celebrations atop Chamundi Hill. He added, "People are free to celebrate Mahisha Dasara at their homes and pray for sons like Mahisha, but I have no objections to that." Regarding the recent violence in Nagamangala, Simha criticised the State government for failing to prevent such incidents during the Ganesha idol immersion procession. *—Salar News*

VINTAGE TO AVANT-GARDE

Int'l Autoshow is back with 3rd edition

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Gleaming vintage cars to vehicles that will fit straight into a futuristic car park are what the 3rd edition of International Autoshow, scheduled from 13-16 September in Bengaluru, promise.

The event is organised by Triune Exhibitors Pvt Ltd, along with TYGA events.

"Our first and second editions were held in 2010 and 2011. But, since there were too many such car shows happening in Bengaluru, we decided to focus more on B2B shows. From this year on, we decided to bring back the auto show too," said Cyril Pereira, managing director of Triune Exhibitors Pvt Ltd, to PTI.

According to him, more than 100 companies from all over India have taken part in the autoshow.

Vintage car belonging to Dharmastala Dharmadhikari Veerendra Heggade displayed at Auto Show at Palace Grounds *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

"We are expecting around 40,000 business visitors and more than Rs 300 crore worth business enquiries to be generated," added Pereira.

The four-day exhibition is not only showcasing vehicle manufacturers, but also components and accessories manufacturers, too.

As a tribute to automotive excellence, 10 of the vintage cars, including 1954 Dodge Kingsway, Karnataka's first state vehicle, from Payana Vintage Car Museum in Naguvinahalli in Srirangapatna taluk, about 130km from Bengaluru, were also displayed at the auto show.

The other highlight is the unveiling of A-thon, India's first all-terrain vehicles.

Our assisted autonomous tech can not only be used in plantations and orchards, but also for defence purposes," said Irfann sheriff, chief founder of A-thon.

At the autoshow, two of their cars, Arav and Advik, were unveiled. *—PTI*

A LOOK AT KEJRIWAL'S CASE

- **NOV 2021** Delhi government introduces new excise policy
- **AUGUST 2022** CBI & ED register casesexcise policy
- **SEPT 2022** Delhi government scraps excise policy
- **OCT 2023 TO MARCH 2024:** ED issues nine summonses to Kejriwal
- **21 MARCH, 2024** Delhi HC refuses to grant protection from arrest
- **10 MAY** Delhi government introduces new excise policy
- **20 JUNE** SThe trial court grants regular bail to Kejriwal
- **21 JUNE** ED moves HC challenging the bail order
- **25 JUNE** HC stays bail granted by trial court
- **26 JUNE** CBI arrests Kejriwal from jail
- **12 JULY** SC grants interim bail to Kejriwal in ED case but he stays in jail
- **17 JULY** Kejriwal challenges in Delhi HC his arrest
- **5 AUG** Delhi HC upholds Kejriwal 's arrest
- **12 AUG** Kejriwal moves SC
- **11 SEPT** Delhi court extends judicial custody till 25 Sept
- **13 SEPT** DSC grants bail to Kejriwal, says prolonged incarceration amounts to unjust deprivation of liberty

Kejriwal to campaign in Haryana; BJP says quit

AAP demands BJP's apology for keeping a staunchly honest leader in jail; BJP still sees him as an accused

CHANDIGARH, 13 SEPT

Shortly after Arvind Kejriwal was granted bail by the Supreme Court, AAP's Haryana unit chief Sushil Gupta on Friday said his party supremo will campaign in the state, where the people are looking for a change.

"We will now fight the polls with double energy. Kejriwal ji will soon start his campaign in Haryana," Gupta said as he hailed the Supreme Court decision granting bail to the Delhi chief minister.

Gupta, whose party is fighting the October 5 Assembly polls on its own, said the people are waiting to "oust" BJP from power.

AAP on Friday demanded that BJP should apologise to the country for keeping a "staunchly honest" leader like Arvind Kejriwal in jail, and said the Supreme Court order granting him bail in the excise policy case has exposed the BJP's "lies".

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal being blessed by his parents as he arrives at his residence after being released from Tihar Jail on bail, in New Delhi, on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

At a joint press conference here, senior AAP leader and former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia said the Supreme Court order granting bail to Kejriwal was a moment of "big relief" for the party and its leaders and workers.

> **Congratulations to AAP family! Kudos for staying strong Wishing also the soonest release of our other leaders**
>
> - Sunita Kejriwal, Arvind Kejriwal's wife

"The bail order is a big slap on the BJP's face. The court noted that the CBI was acting like a caged parrot," Sisodia said.

Hitting out at Kejriwal, BJP said he should immediately step down as the Supreme Court has granted him only conditional bail and that he continues to be an accused in a corruption case linked to the excise policy 'scam'.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said in a statement that Kejriwal has got bail from the court but he has no right to remain on the post of the chief minister. *—PTI*

CBI should dispel notion of being caged parrot: SC

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Observing that the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal by CBI was unjustified, Supreme Court judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan on Friday came down heavily on the premier agency for arresting the Delhi chief minister in the corruption case linked to excise policy 'scam', and said it must dispel the notion of being a caged parrot.

Writing a separate concurring judgement granting bail to the AAP supremo, Justice Bhuyan questioned the timing of Kejriwal's arrest by the CBI and said its aim was to frustrate grant of bail to him in the ED case.

"Every effort must be made to remove any perception that investigation was not carried out fairly and that the arrest was made in a high-handed and biased manner.

"Such action on the part of the CBI raises a serious question mark on the timing of the arrest; rather on the arrest itself. For 22 months, CBI does not arrest the appellant but after the learned Special Judge grants regular bail to the appellant in the ED case, CBI seeks his custody.

"In a functional democracy governed bythe rule of law, perception matters. Like Caesar's wife, an investigating agency must be above board. Not long ago, this court has castigated CBI comparing it to a caged parrot. It is imperative that CBI dispels the notion of it being a caged parrot. Rather, the perception should be that of an uncaged parrot," Justice Bhuyan wrote. *—PTI*

MP to give 700 US guns to BSF amid B'desh turmoil

BHOPAL, 13 SEPT

Madhya Pradesh forest department will give 700 pump action guns from its armoury to the Border Security force for deployment along the international border with restive Bangladesh, a senior official said on Friday. Rubber bullets are fired from these guns and they are used in the state to push back armed poachers and tree-felling gangs, said MP Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Protection) PK Singh. "We will give 700 pump action guns from our armoury to the Border Security Force," Singh told PTI. He confirmed the MP government had asked the forest department for these guns after getting a letter from Union home ministry in connection with ramping up security along border with Bangladesh. . *—PTI*

'JMM patronising B'deshi infiltrators in for vote bank'

RANCHI, 13 SEPT

Leader of Opposition in Jharkhand Assembly Amar Bauri said the central government had informed the high court that illegal Bangladeshi immigrants are living in the state, which the JMM-led alliance government has been denying for "vote bank". In an affidavit filed before a division bench of acting Chief Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad and Justice Arun Kumar Rai on Thursday, the Centre said Bangladeshis illegally entered Jharkhand through Sahebgunj and Pakur districts. The senior BJP leader said that they have been raising the issue for a long time but the JMM-led alliance government has been denying the threat. *—PTI*

Local UP BSP leader, 3 others booked in rape case

BIJNOR, 13 SEPT

Four people, including a local Bahujan Samaj Party leader and doctor, have been booked in a rape case of a 32-year-old woman at his clinic, police said on Friday. The doctor is accused of recording a video of the incident but has denied the allegations as "baseless" and claimed that the woman never came to his clinic. According to police, the FIR was registered based on the complaint lodged by the woman on 9 September. She said that four months ago, she fell ill and then contacted a man named Vasulidin of her village who took her to Dr. Shakeel Ahmed's clinic. She was then allegedly raped by Vasulidin while Ahmed recorded a video of the act, Arj said. Police said that Vasulidin, Azim, Ahmed and the nurse have been booked in the case. *—PTI*

Conspiracy hatched to attack medics on sit-in: TMC leader

KOLKATA, 13 SEPT

Senior Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh on Friday claimed that some Opposition political forces have hatched a conspiracy to attack the protesting junior doctors to defame the Mamata Banerjee government and the ruling party of West Bengal.

The medics' sit-in outside Swasthya Bhavan, the state health department headquarters, entered the fourth day on Friday. They are demanding removal of top officials of the department for their alleged involvement in corruption in medical colleges in the state.

Holding a press conference, Ghosh, a former Rajya Sabha MP, played a purported audio clip in which two persons are heard planning to "attack the junior doctors on their return from (state secretariat) Nabanna on 12 September night".

Kunal Ghosh **PHOTO: PTI**

The meeting, however, did not take place as the state government did not agree to live-streaming the talks as demanded by junior doctors.

"The audio clip makes it clear that some people wanted to attack the junior doctors last night and they may be at the game again," the TMC leader said. *—PTI*

Court turns down CBI plea for narco test on prime accused

Kolkata, 13 Sept

A local court on Friday turned down CBI's appeal to conduct a narco analysis test on the prime accused in the alleged rape and murder of a doctor at the RG Kar hospital here, an officer said. Roy had initially agreed to take the test but later changed his mind, CBI sources claimed. *—PTI*

IMA seeks central act on violence against medics

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

A delegation of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Friday met with Union Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan and apprised him of the importance of bringing a central Act to check violence on medical professionals at their workplace.

IMA national president Dr RV Asokan and national vice-president Dr Shivkumar Utture met with Somanathan at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan.

Both Asokan and Utture also attended a subgroup meeting of the National Task Force at Nirman Bhavan, according to an internal communication.

The IMA is learnt to have put forward its recommendations for improving the working conditions of healthcare professionals.

The IMA has filed an interlocutory application in the Supreme Court in the RG Kar hospital rape-murder case, the internal communication said.

Secondly, for its demand for declaring hospitals as safe zones, the IMA had said that the concept of safe zones could be embedded. *—PTI*

HARYANA IN FOCUS

Kharge, Sonia, Rahul among 40 Congress star campaigners

CHANDIGARH, 13 SEPT

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, party leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Bhupinder Hooda, Kumari Selja and Randeep Singh Surjewala are among the 40 star campaigners for the party for the October 5 Haryana Assembly polls.

The names of Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia, who were at the forefront of the wrestlers' protest against then WFI chief and former BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, and recently joined the Congress, also figure in the list of the party's star campaigners.

Among other prominent campaigners are Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, party's Haryana affairs in-charge Deepak Babaria, State unit chief of the party Udai Bhan and Ajay Maken, Birender Singh, Anand Sharma and Sachin Pilot.

Former chief ministers Ashok Gehlot, Bhupesh Baghel, Charanjit Singh Channi also figure in the list of star campaigners. *—PTI*

MANY CROREPATIS IN FRAY FOR HARYANA POLLS

CHANDIGARH, 13 SEPT

Former Haryana finance minister and BJP nominee from the Narnaund assembly seat for the 5 October assembly polls, Captain Abhimanyu is the richest candidate in the state with declared assets worth Rs 417 crore.

According to his poll affidavit, 56-year-old Capt Abhimanyu has declared his moveable and immovable assets, including those of his wife, as Rs 369.03 crore and Rs 47.96 crore, respectively.

Though he has shown Rs 1.1 lakh as cash-in-hand, the former Haryana finance minister has declared investments in bonds, debentures and shares worth Rs 251 crore, as per his affidavit.

Savitri Jindal, who has entered the electoral contest from the Hisar seat as an independent, has declared her assets worth Rs 270 crore.*—PTI*

HOTEL OWNER VS FM: ANNAMALAI APOLOGISES

CHENNAI, 13 SEPT

Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai on Friday apologised for the action of his party functionaries in sharing on social media a video of a private conversation between a hotel chain owner in Coimbatore and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Barely minutes after the video went viral, the DMK, Congress and other netizens criticised the BJP for allegedly forcing a reputed hotelier to tender an apology for his remarks on Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 12 September in Coimbatore.

In the controversial leaked video, Sri Annapoorna Restaurant owner Srinivasan could be heard saying to the Finance Minister that he was not affiliated to any party, before apologising.

Only a day ago, he had raised the issue of GST at an event attended by Sitharaman in Coimbatore and had said "the problem is that GST is applied differently to each item. For instance, there is no GST on bun. But if you apply cream on it, the GST becomes 18 per cent."

Due to this, customers, especially families, ask for bun and cream separately saying they will apply the cream on the bun themselves to save money, he had said. *—PTI*

TYTLER PLEADS NOT GUILTY IN RIOT CASE

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

A Delhi court on Friday framed charges of murder and other offences against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler in a 1984-anti Sikh riots case.

Special Judge Rakesh Siyal directed that Tytler face trial after he pleaded not guilty to the offences.

The judge had on August 30 said there was sufficient ground to proceed against the accused.

A witness had earlier submitted in the charge sheet that Tytler came out of a white Ambassador car in front of Gurudwara Pul Bangash here on November 1, 1984 and instigated the mob by saying, "Kill the Sikhs, they have killed our mother", that led to 'murder' of three people.

The court ordered framing of charges for various offences, including unlawful assembly, rioting, promoting enmity between different groups, house trespass and theft.*—PTI*

BRS leaders under 'house arrest' after meet

HYDERABAD, 13 SEPT

Against the backdrop of a proposed meeting of BRS party activists of Serilingampally Assembly constituency to be held at the residence of MLA Arekapudi Gandhi who defected to Congress, several leaders and cadres of the Opposition party on Friday were put under "house arrest."

BRS leaders would start from the residence of its Medchal district president Sambhipur Raju for the meeting, the party sources said.

The police made tight security arrangements at the residence of Sambhipur Raju as BRS leaders were expected to gather there before leaving for the meeting at the residence of turncoat MLA Gandhi.

The meeting was a result of a war of words and a scuffle between the supporters of BRS MLA P Kaushik Reddy and turncoat MLA Gandhi, at the former's residence here on Thursday which witnessed tense moments.

- BRS leaders would start from the residence of its Medchal district president Sambhipur Raju for the meeting, the party sources said

A police official said Raju and Kaushik Reddy were put under house arrest at the residence of Raju with a view to ensure that law and order was not disturbed.

BRS leaders were taken into custody (later released) illegally on Thursday and they were put under house arrest today, Rama Rao said in a statement.

Congress government claims that it was inspired by the welfare rule of former PM Indira Gandhi but its actions now remind of emergency, he alleged. *—PTI*

'ALLEGATIONS FALSE, MALICIOUS'

SEBI chief breaks the silence

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

SEBI chief Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch on Friday denied a series of allegations of impropriety and conflict of interest levelled by Congress, saying these are "incorrect, motivated and defamatory".

"If the objective had been to arrive at the truth rather than to malign individuals and institutions with distortions of facts, we wonder why all allegations would not be brought out, in public, at one go. We would then have given all the facts at one go," Buchs said in a six-page statement.

The statement comes in the backdrop of the Congress making a series of allegations of impropriety against Madhabi Puri Buch including receiving income from ICICI Bank post-retirement, earning rental income from Wockhardt Associates. Besides, the political party made accusations against consulting assignments of Dhaval Buch and his companies -- Agora Advisory in India and Agora Partners in Singapore.

Madhabi Puri Buch **PHOTO: PTI**

"... the allegations are completely false, malicious and defamatory. Madhabi has complied with all the disclosure and recusal guidelines of SEBI, and in fact, maintained a proactive continuing recusal list with SEBI over and above the requirements under the guidelines ," the statement noted.

On the allegation of rental income received from a property owned by Madhabi and Dhaval, the duo said that the property was leased out in the normal course. As it turned out subsequently, the lessee happened to be an associate of Wockhardt, a listed company which had come under investigation.

Earlier this week, US-based short seller Hindenburg Research questioned SEBI chief's "complete silence" on fresh allegations of impropriety, conflict of interest and accepting payments from companies while serving as a member of the market regulator. *—PTI*

TMC'S MAHUA FILES PLAINT AGAINST SEBI CHIEF

KOLKATA, 13 SEPT

TMC MP Mahua Moitra on Friday lodged a complaint with the Lokpal against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch alleging "quid pro quo arrangements which threatens national interests".

"My LokPal complaint against Ms Puri-Buch been filed electronically & in physical form. LokPal must within 30 days refer it to CBI/ED for a preliminary investigation and then a full FIR enquiry," she posted on X.

In a three-page letter, Moitra said as the issue concerns national interests and the interest of the crores of investors, the matter needs to be investigated. *—PTI*

EAM reveals his father was on 1984 hijacked flight

GENEVA, 13 SEPT

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday revealed that his father was on a hijacked flight in 1984 and said he had a unique window on "both sides" in such situations – the perspective of family members and those in the government.

Jaishankar was answering a question during a community event here about the recently released television series on the hijacking of IC814 in 1999.

With a disclaimer that he has not watched the series, Jaishankar went on to reveal his personal connection with the hijacking incident.

"In 1984 there was a hijacking. I was a very young officer. I was part of the team which was dealing with it. I rang up my mother, actually, to tell her, 'Look, I can't come. There's a hijacking," he said elaborating how it was his turn to go home and feed his young son as his wife too was working.

- Jaishankar was an IFS officer and became a minister after his retirement. His father K Subrahmanyam was an IAS officer and a regular commentator

"And then I discovered, my father was on the flight. The flight ended up in Dubai. It's a long story, but fortunately, nobody got killed. It could have ended as a problem," he added.

Jaishankar was an IFS officer and became a minister after his retirement. His father K Subrahmanyam was an IAS officer and a regular commentator on strategic issues. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

7 die as truck collides with govt bus in Andhra

PALAMANERU, 13 SEPT

Seven people died on Friday after a Bengaluru-bound APSRTC bus they were travelling in collided with a truck here, said police. The accident occurred at Mogili Ghat road near Palamaneru mandal in Chittoor district, which also left over 10 people injured. According to police, the truck crossed the divider and crashed into the bus. "We have identified seven dead bodies and more than 10 people were injured in the accident," a police official said. *—PTI*

HC grants bail to 4 basement owners in UPSC death case

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Delhi High Court on Friday granted interim bail till 30 January to four co-owners of the basement of an Old Rajinder Nagar coaching centre where three civil services aspirants drowned in July. Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma, while pronouncing the verdict on the bail pleas of the four accused, said the relief is subject to the co-owners depositing Rs 5 crore with the Red Cross. The judge said the conduct of the co-owners is "unpardonable" and an "act of greed". In the order, a request has been made to the Lieutenant Governor to constitute a committee under a retired high court judge to ensure no coaching centre is permitted to run without permission. The authorities should also carve out a place for coaching centres in the capital, Justice Sharma added. Three civil service aspirants, Shreya Yadav, 25, from Uttar Pradesh; Tanya Soni, 25, from Telangana and Nevin Delvin, 24, from Kerala, died after the basement of the building housing Rau's IAS Study Circle was flooded following heavy rains in central Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar on 27 July. *—PTI*

Chennai reels under power cuts after fire at sub-stn

CHENNAI, 13 SEPT

Several parts of Chennai reeled under a sudden power outage due to a fire incident which caused sequential faults on both feeders at the Manali substation, here. Power supply was, however, restored by Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO), which responded promptly, by rerouting supply through alternate pathways, an official said on Friday. The Manali substation is an important power hub of Chennai supplying electricity to major parts of the city. There are two charger sources namely Alamatty and NCTPS II exclusively to supply power to this substation. These were designed to provide 100 per cent power to the sub-station. On 12 September, at around 9.58 pm, a massive fire broke out at the Almatty substation and this led to subsequent blackout. *—PTI*

NIA raids in Punjab over attack on envoy in Canada

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday conducted searches in Punjab in its probe into the attack on the Indian High Commission in Canada by pro-Khalistan supporters, officials said. The anti-terror probe agency had registered a case in this regard in June last year. The NIA is conducting searches in Punjab in the case, they said. The case relates to protest by pro-Khalistani supporters outside the Indian mission in Ottawa, Canada on 23 March, 2023, "who raised anti-India slogan, tied Khalistani flags on the boundary wall of the High Commission and hurled two grenades inside the High Commission building", according to the NIA's FIR. *—PTI*

After Shimla, protest erupts in Mandi over illegal mosque

Hindu groups protest even after Muslims call for demolition

Police use water cannons to disperse protesters demanding the demolition of a mosque, in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh **PHOTO: PTI**

MANDI/SHIMLA, 13 SEPT

Police used water cannons on Friday to disperse protesters demanding the demolition of a portion of a mosque built on encroached government land in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi town.

The mosque management committee have been served a notice by the Mandi municipal corporation to remove the encroachment within 30 days. According to the notice, the mosque stands on 232 sq m of land while the approval granted was just for 45 sq m.

Raising slogans of "Jai Shri Ram", the protesters initially held a march in the Mandi market area and sat on a dharna at Seri manch. Later, when they made attempts to proceed towards the mosque, police stopped them and used water cannons to bring the situation under control.

Security had been beefed up by the police in Mandi with the deployment of heavy force after Hindu outfits gave the call for the protest march.

On Thursday, members of the Muslim community had demolished an unauthorised portion of the mosque themselves. The unauthorised construction was on a plot of land which belongs to the public works department. The department and the municipal corporation had earlier served notices on the mosque management committee in this connection. Members of the VHP and the Bajrang Dal have demanded that all illegal structures belonging to Muslims be demolished, alongside encroachments on government land across the state. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu appealed to the people of the state to maintain peace and brotherhood.

Referring to the protest by Hindu organisations demanding the demolition of the unauthorised structure of the mosque in Mandi town, he said Himachal Pradesh is a state of protest. "There are protests by Dev Bhumi, the BJP, the CPI(M) and the unemployed." "We all sitting here is a product of the student movement," Sukhu said, adding that protest is a part of democracy but they should be peaceful. He said the people of the Muslim community have themselves come forward and offered to demolish unauthorised structures. They even demolished a portion of the mosque in Mandi on Thursday, Sukhu added.

He said that the all-party meeting agreed that peace and brotherhood should prevail in the state and that all unauthorised construction should be dealt with strictly as per the law. *—PTI*

Delhi faces waterlogging, traffic snarls amid rains

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Rain lashed the Delhi-National Capital Region on Friday, causing waterlogging and traffic snarls in several areas.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an orange alert for Friday in the national capital.

At many places in Delhi, vehicles could be seen making their way through the waterlogged roads.

IMD has predicted more rainfall accompanied by gusty winds reaching speeds of 30 kmph for the national capital until Friday. A depression that formed over the Bay of Bengal and is now in central Uttar Pradesh is one of the factors for the downpours that Delhi and other places in North India are receiving.

The IMD predicted heavy to very heavy rain, with extremely heavy rain at isolated places over Uttarakhand and west Uttar Pradesh, heavy rain at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh and Delhi, heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places over Haryana, Chandigarh, east Uttar Pradesh and east Rajasthan, and thunderstorms and lightning at isolated places over north-west India except Haryana for today. *—ANI*

1 DEAD AFTER WALL COLLAPSES IN DELHI

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Amidst rains in several parts of the national capital, a wall of a 'dargah' collapsed in central Delhi's Nabi Karim area on Friday morning leaving one person dead and two others injured, officials said.

The official said that two people were rescued but a few people were fear trapped under the debris of the wall. Following the rescue operation, a man trapped under the debris was taken out.

He was taken to the hospital, where he was declared dead, he added.

The deceased Rehmat, 35, is a resident of Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh, the officer said.

Rehmat, who used to drive an e-rickshaw, used to live in a temporary structure set up under the wall, he added. *—PTI*

MESSAGE THROUGH GANESHA

An artist from Mumbai has created a Ganesha idol in the 'Ardhanari' form – half male, half female – to highlight the need for harmony between the two genders amid the Kolkata rape horror. Rintu Rathod sculpted the idol of the elephant-headed deity using 20 kg chocolate **PHOTO: PTI**

SC halts cutting of trees for Kolkata metro project

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Supreme Court **PHOTO: PTI**

Supreme Court on Friday directed that no trees would be felled or transplanted from now onwards for the metro rail project in the maidan area adjoining the iconic Victoria Memoria in Kolkata.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan issued notices to the West Bengal government, the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) and others seeking their responses on a plea challenging the 20 June verdict of Calcutta High Court.

The High court had dismissed a petition seeking a direction to stop all metro construction in area due to alleged felling and transplantation of a large number of trees.

The counsel appearing for petitioner 'People United For Better Living in Kolkata (PUBLIC)' told the bench that the maidan area was extremely important for the city.

He said the route chosen for the metro project goes through maidan area and 700 trees were to be transplanted, 500 trees would have to be removed.

The plea filed in the High Court had prayed for an order to stop the construction of the Joka-Esplanade metro project in the maidan area adjoining the Victoria Memorial. The Joka-Esplanade metro project is partially operational between Joka and Majerhat stations in the south-western suburbs of Kolkata. Completion of the project will provide an important and time-saving connectivity option to people from these places to the heart of the city. The 16.7-km Joka-Esplanade metro project will have a 5.05-km underground stretch from Khidirpur to Esplanade, an official had earlier said. The plea had also sought directions to the metro authorities to call for a review of the proposed project by independent experts in urban system and transport planning and also for setting up an expert committee to examine the feasibility of transplanting the trees. *—PTI*

Gym owner shot dead by bikers in Delhi's posh area

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

In a suspected case of gang war, a 35-year-old gym owner was shot dead by two bike borne assailants at the posh neighbourhood of south Delhi's Greater Kailash area last night, officials on Friday said.

The Delhi Police Special Cell on Friday detained six people in the case as jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's gang members are suspected to be involved in the murder.

The victim Nadir Shah, who was facing previous criminal cases, including robberies and attempt to murder, used to run a gym in partnership in Greater Kailash Part 1.

He was shot four times at about 10.44 pm, police said.

A CCTV of the incident surfaced on the social media in which Shah, an Afghan-origin man, could be seen talking with a person when one of the attackers walked towards him and opened a spree of firing in a close range.

The attacker fled away, as police suspect, on a motorbike on which his associate was waiting for him.

Minutes after the incident, a purported social media post from an account in the name of gangster Rohit Godara took the responsibility of Shah's shooting.

The post stated that "shooting has been instructed by a jailed criminal Sameer Baba because Shah was troubling in their business. Whoever will support our rival and trouble us will be shot like this".

The post also mentioned the names of jailed gangster Lawrence's associates "Rohit Godara, Goly Brar, Gogi gang and Kala Rana gang". *—PTI*

THANE ON ALERT

Locals complain of breathing issues after gas leak at factory

THANE, 13 SEPT

Gas leak at a chemical company in Ambernath affected visibility in the area

Residents in the vicinity of an industrial zone complained of eye irritation and breathing difficulties as a thick haze enveloped the area after a suspected gas leak from a factory in Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said on Friday.

The situation is under control and there were no injuries or hospitalisations, said Yasin Tadvi, Chief of the Disaster Management Cell of the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC).

Panic ensued after smog-like conditions prevailed in the Morivali MIDC area of Ambernath town, on the outskirts of Mumbai, around 11pm on Thursday, the official said.

After receiving complaints about a burning sensation in the eyes and breathlessness, local firefighters investigated the source of the haze, which was traced to a chemical company. Officials said a phosphorous-based chemical at the factory caused a dense white smoke, which spread through the area. The manufacturing activities at the company have been halted temporarily, the official added. *—PTI*

11-YR-OLD ASSAULTED

Man lynched on train over rape

KANPUR, 13 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

A 34-year-old railway contract labourer was beaten to death by fellow passengers on a moving Humsafar Express train between Lucknow and Kanpur after he allegedly sexually assaulted an 11-year-old girl, police said on Friday.

The deceased Prashant Kumar is a native of Bihar. He was caught by the victim's family and other passengers after the incident on Tuesday.

Additional DG (Railway) Prakash D told PTI on Friday that Kumar had boarded the Humsafar Express from Siwan, Bihar, along with the victim's family. He allegedly offered his berth to the 11-year-old girl and sexually assaulted her while her mother was away.

The girl reported the incident to her mother, who informed her family and other passengers. Enraged by the sexual assault, the victim's family and passengers thrashed Kumar, He was taken into custody by the GRP at Kanpur Central station. Due to his deteriorating health, the GRP took Kumar to KPM Hospital, where he was pronounced dead, said the officer.

The victim's mother has filed an FIR against Kumar under section 74 (criminal force to any woman intending to outrage her modesty) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the ADG said. *—PTI*

2 rape Tripura teen, dump her in jungle

AGARTALA, 13 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

A 16-year-old girl, was allegedly kidnapped, gangraped and dumped into a jungle by two people in North Tripura district, police said on Friday.

The victim is undergoing treatment at Dharmanagar district hospital as she suffered multiple injuries.

Police arrested two people.

"The girl was walking on a village road on Thursday. Two people riding a bike kidnapped the girl and took her to a nearby jungle and gangraped her," the Superintendent of Police (SP), North Tripura, Bhanupada Chakraborty said on Friday.

After committing the crime, they deserted the girl and fled, the SP said.

Locals later spotted the girl, in an unconscious state, and informed her family about the incident.

"After being alerted by the villagers, we rushed to the spot and rescued my sister, and took her to the Uptakhali health facility. She was referred to Dharmanagar district hospital from there. Her condition was serious," the victim's elder sister told the reporters.

The people who raped my sister threw her in the jungle assuming that she died, he said. *—PTI*

Doctor held for raping minor patient

A junior doctor at Agra's Sarojani Naidu Medical College and Hospital has been arrested for allegedly raping an 11-year-old girl, police said. An FIR has been lodged against Dilshad Hussain of the paediatric department of the SN Medical Hospital, they said. . The girl was admitted due to high fever on 6 September. The doctor called the girl in his chamber and raped her. —PTI

MP rape: Accused found jawans due to music

INDORE, 13 SEPT

The men who allegedly attacked two Army officers and raped their woman friend near Mhow in Madhya Pradesh were drawn to the picnic spot after hearing loud music, police said on Friday.

The police have arrested three out of six men for the attack that occurred near Jam Gate, a popular tourist spot, on the intervening night of 10 and 11 September.

The spot is around 30 km from the Mhow military cantonment. In monsoon, tourists frequent the spot during the day, and the area is deserted at night.

Superintendent of Police Hitika Vasal said two Army officers and their two women friends had been at the spot since 11 pm on Tuesday. "The four of them were listening to loud music, and on hearing the sound in the deserted area late in the night, the six accused reached the spot and committed the crime," she said. One of the attackers threatened the victims with a pistol. *—PTI*

SC JUNKS PLEA TO DECLARE AGRA 'HERITAGE CITY'

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea seeking to declare Agra a "heritage city" and said there is nothing to show that such a declaration would give the city any special advantage.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan dismissed the application filed in a 1984 PIL on the protection and preservation of the iconic Taj Mahal and its adjoining areas. During the hearing, the bench asked the counsel what advantage the city would get if it was declared a heritage city and what were the provisions under the law for such a declaration. Justice Oka observed that there was hardly anything smart in a city that has been declared a "smart city". *—PTI*

ASIA'S LONGEST WATER TUNNEL

India completed the construction of its Asia's longest mountain water tunnel in Himachal Pradesh through Parvati project that is designed for power generation on Friday. The construction cost of the water tunnel that stretches 32km long and 6m wide is said to exceed Rs 10,000 crore. The Parvati project spans three areas in Kullu district—Parvati, Gadsa, and Sainj. As a result, power generation in Himachal will reach 1500MW.
PHOTO: @NPHC

What is the ₹2,000 cr Mission Mausam project?

As weather patterns grow more unpredictable due to climate crisis, India is taking a giant leap with "Mission Mausam" to improve weather understanding and forecasting through expanded observation networks, better modeling and advanced tools like AI and machine learning.

The mission will include creating a laboratory to artificially develop clouds, increasing the number of radars by over 150 per cent and adding new satellites, supercomputers and much more.

Why is it needed?

According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, tropical weather forecasting remains challenging due to the complexity of atmospheric processes and limitations in current observation and model resolution.

Observational data is relatively sparse, both spatially and temporally, and the horizontal resolution of Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models, currently at 12 kilometres, makes it difficult to accurately forecast small-scale weather events in India, it said.

At the same time, climate change is making the atmosphere more chaotic, resulting in isolated heavy rainfall and localised droughts, which pose simultaneous challenges of flooding and drought. Cloudbursts, thunderstorms, lightning and squalls are among the least understood weather events in India.

Understanding these complex patterns requires in-depth knowledge of physical processes occurring within and outside clouds, on the surface, in the upper atmosphere, over oceans and in polar regions, the ministry said.

This calls for high-frequency observations at the ground level and across the earth system with improved spatial and vertical resolutions to monitor the earth's dynamic systems effectively and increasing the horizontal resolution of NWP models from 12 kilometres to six kilometres to generate panchayat-level forecasts, it said.

The mission will include creating a laboratory to artificially develop clouds, increasing radars and adding new satellites ***PHOTO: PTI***

What will happen over the next five years?

Union Ministry of Earth Sciences Secretary M. Ravichandran said the five-year mission would be implemented in two phases.

The first phase, which runs until March 2026, will focus on expanding the observation network. This includes adding around 70 Doppler radars, high-performance computers and setting up 10 wind profilers and 10 radiometers.

To put the scale of the task into context, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has installed 39 Doppler radars to date and has never set up a wind profiler.

"We will also conduct an Observing System Simulation Experiment (OSSE) in the first phase, which will help determine the number of observations needed moving forward," Ravichandran said.

The second phase will focus on adding satellites and aircraft to further enhance observational capabilities.

What is a cloud chamber and what does Mission Mausam say about weather management?

The ministry has said that a "cloud chamber" will be established at the Indian Institute of Meteorology in Pune within the next one and a half years under the mission to study the processes occurring within clouds in the context of rising temperatures.

Rising temperatures lead to clouds becoming taller and more electrically active, while their horizontal spread may shrink. This can result in stronger thunderstorms and more frequent lightning events and impact rainfall dynamics, Ravichandran said.

The insights gained from the cloud chamber will also help improve the parameterization of weather models, supporting the indigenization of these models, he said.

Cloud seeding involves dispersing substances into the air to encourage condensation, resulting in precipitation. The most common substances used for cloud seeding include silver iodide, potassium iodide and dry ice (solid carbon dioxide). These agents provide the nuclei around which water vapour can condense, ultimately leading to the formation of rain or snow.

This weather modification technique has been utilised in several parts of the world, primarily in the regions experiencing water scarcity or drought conditions.

Some of the countries and states that have employed the cloud seeding technology include the US, China, Australia and the UAE.

However, the effectiveness and environmental impact of cloud seeding remain subjects of ongoing research.

An IMD official told PTI that there have been a few attempts in India in this regard -- in Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The research is ongoing, but it has not made significant progress so far.

The Delhi government also considered using cloud seeding to improve air quality during winter in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur. The goal was to induce rain to wash away pollutants. However, the project got delayed because it required permissions from several Central government agencies, including aviation and environmental authorities.

What are the other main objectives?

Mission Mausam aims to improve short to medium range weather forecast accuracy by five to 10 per cent and enhance air quality prediction in all major metro cities by up to 10 per cent.

It will enable weather prediction up to the panchayat level with a lead time of 10 to 15 days and improve the nowcast frequency from three hours to one hour.

A nowcast provides a very short-term prediction, usually for the next few hours. It is useful for tracking fast-changing weather events such as thunderstorms, heavy rain or snow. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

Harris backs oil drilling, betrays climate fight

Even as she promoted her efforts to boost clean energy, Vice President Kamala Harris said in Tuesday's debate that the Biden-Harris administration has overseen "the largest increase in domestic oil production in history because of an approach that recognises that we cannot over rely on foreign oil".

The comment by Harris, a longtime climate hawk who backed the original Green New Deal, surprised supporters and opponents alike — and conflicted with frequent boasts by Harris and President Joe Biden that they are champions in the fight to slow global warming.

After former President Donald Trump withdrew the US from the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Biden-Harris administration reentered the global pact aimed at reducing emissions. The administration also set a target to slash US greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030 and moved to accelerate renewable energy projects and shift away from fossil fuels.

Liam Donovan, a Republican strategist, said it was notable that at a debate in energy-rich Pennsylvania, Harris chose to brag about something that President Biden has barely acknowledged — that domestic fossil fuel production under the Biden administration is at an all-time high.

Crude production averaged 12.9 million barrels a day last year, eclipsing a previous record set in 2019 under Trump, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

The statement was "another sign of Harris' sprint to the middle" on energy policy and other issues, Donovan said.

Harris went one step further, rebranding the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act — the administration's signature climate law — as a boon to fracking and other drilling, thanks to lease-sale requirements inserted into the bill by independent West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, a key swing vote in the Senate and a strong supporter of the fossil fuel industry.

Harris's comments disappointed some in the environmental community.

"Harris spent more time promoting fracking than laying out a bold vision for a clean energy future,'' O'Hanlon said. "Young voters want more from Harris'' on climate change, she added. "We want to see a real plan that meets the scale and urgency of this crisis.''

Her group is working to turn out young voters, "but we hear people asking every day, What are Democrats going to do for us?'" O'Hanlon said. "To win, Harris needs to show young people she will fight for us.''

Other environmental groups were less critical, citing the looming threat to climate action posed by Trump, who rolled back more than 100 environmental protections during his term as president.

"There is only one presidential candidate who is a champion for climate action and that is Kamala Harris,'' said Alex Glass, a spokesperson for Climate Power, a liberal advocacy group. Harris "laid out a clear vision to invest in clean energy jobs and lower costs for working families", Glass said.

By comparison, she said Trump "will do the bidding of his Big Oil donors".

Glass cited the conservative Project 2025, written by Trump allies, saying it will put millions of clean-energy jobs at risk and let oil companies "profiteer and pollute".

Trump has denied a direct connection to Project 2025 but has endorsed some of its key ideas.

Mike Sommers, president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the oil and gas industry's top lobbying group, said Harris' comment in support of fracking reflected political reality in the closely contested election. "You have to be for fracking to be elected president in 2024,'' he said. "That's good news for our industry and great news for American consumers."

In the debate, Trump disputed Harris's claim that she will not try to ban fracking, but Sommers said he takes Harris at her word and welcomes her support for fracking and oil drilling more generally.

Asked if he was concerned about Harris' past actions suing oil companies, Sommers said no. The oil and gas industry supports 11 million jobs, he said, and the price of gasoline "is determined by economics — supply and demand. There is no man behind the curtain" rigging prices.

As California attorney general, Harris "won tens of millions in settlements against Big Oil and held polluters accountable", her campaign says. Her platform includes a promise to "hold polluters accountable to secure clean air and water for all".

Trump, meanwhile, has vowed to rescind unspent funds from the climate law and other programs, and said he will target offshore wind projects. He said Harris would move to restrict onshore oil and gas production if elected.

"They'll go back to destroying our country, and oil will be dead, fossil fuel will be dead," Trump said.

A president's power to restrict fracking, even on federal lands, is limited, and barring the practice on private land would require an act of Congress. *—PTI*

Democratic Presidential nominee and Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during a campaign event in Charlotte, NC, on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS

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Kerala prison convicts turn farmers, reap harvest for Onam

In a radical departure from traditional prison reform, an Open Prison and Correctional Home for males near Thiruvananthapuram is pioneering a bold experiment in rehabilitation.

By transforming 472 acres of land into a thriving farm, the facility in Nettukaltheri is not only challenging conventional notions of incarceration but also empowering inmates to become experts in sustainable farming practices.

From cultivating rubber to raising cattle and honeybees, the prisoners are learning valuable skills that will serve them well upon release.

As the Onam festival season approaches, the Open Prison is abuzz with excitement.

Prisoners are thrilled to be reaping the rewards of their hard work, harvesting the fresh vegetables they grew with care and dedication.

They wear white shirts bearing the numbers allocated to them by the department. All of them are murder case convicts, people who either would have knowingly or accidentally killed someone or multiple people.

They are now washing their stained hands with the fertile soil in this land, carefully nurturing and caring for plants, watching them grow and flourish, and finding joy in the process.

"There is something called agricultural therapy. Nurturing a plant and seeing it flower and bear fruit is proven to have a very positive mental transformation in people. We hope this will help them lead a happy and crime-free life when they leave from here," Rajesh Kumar, superintendent in charge of the open prison, told PTI.

There are more than 350 prisoners housed in this open prison and its annexe located nearby. The prison has rubber plantations as the major cultivation.

In addition, they have vegetables, a dragon fruit farm, a grass farm, and honey bee cages, using almost all available land inside the vast campus.

They had, for some time, discontinued vegetable farming as they found it difficult to market the large quantity of organic vegetables they produce.

The open prison is located about 50 km away from Thiruvananthapuram city and it was unviable for them to transport the vegetables to the city. The prison can sell these vegetables only at rates prescribed by the Horticulture Corporation.

"We grow everything here, and this time we cultivated

From cultivating rubber to raising cattle and honeybees, the prisoners are learning valuable skills that will serve them well upon release ***PHOTO: X/@BETTERINDIA***

vegetables, aiming at the Onam market. On the day of Pooradam, (two days ahead of Thiruvonam, that is Friday), we send these vegetables to the mega Onam mart near our prison headquarters in Poojappura," Ajith Singh WR, agriculture officer of the open prison, told PTI.

The prison authorities managed to generate a revenue of Rs 2.11 crore in the last financial year from the agriculture activities alone. Moreover, these farming activities also provide them with a steady supply of quality vegetables and milk for the mess for the inmates and the staff.

"More than creating revenue for the prison, these activities are meant to be vocational training for the inmates. Many have learnt rubber tapping and other farm activities from the prison and use them even when they go out on parole," Rajesh Kumar said.

The prison also has a sales outlet at the front gate, where local people can also buy the organic vegetables produced there.

They sell the excess milk, after taking what they need for use in the mess, to the milk society. There are more than 50 cows; out of them, 20 are milching.

"Since this location shares its boundary with the forest, we face a lot of issues from wild animals. Indian Gaurs are very common, and along with wild boars, they pose a grave threat to our cultivation. We keep the prison inmates on guard round-the-clock to protect what they produce," Ajith Singh said.

Unlike other central prisons, this open prison does not have huge compound walls but only a fence. "Our inmates work in far corners of this property, and we could only send one guard to look after them. We work here showing full confidence in them," Rajesh Kumar said.

The farm features a large check dam within the property, which caters to its water needs. The cow dung and slurry from the dairy farm, along with the vermicompost from the vermicomposting yard, take care of the farm's fertiliser needs.

There are many prisoners who have been undergoing imprisonment over 20 years. Many repenting of what they had done at the spur of a moment and many hardened criminals, who had committed multiple murders and with little remorse.

An advisory board that studies the behaviour of the prisoners in Central prisons recommends the names of the prisoners to the open prison based on their good conduct and lack of tendency to jailbreak.

At the open prison, there are no cells but only barracks where many live together and have the freedom to watch TV, play indoor and outdoor games, and relax. They also have the opportunity to go home on parole five times a year.

The connection with the soil and nurturing a living plant do make them more grounded and connected as they continue to behave well inside the open prison.

With Onam day arriving, the people of Thiruvananthapuram city will also get to eat what these inmates have painstakingly grown on the farm and can also become a part of making them better citizens of tomorrow. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ILLIAGOLEMM/INSTAGRAM

Yefimchyk, world's 'most monstrous bodybuilder,' dies

MINSK, 13 SEPT

Illia 'Golem' Yefimchyk, known as the world's "most monstrous bodybuilder," has passed away at the age of 36 from a heart attack. Yefimchyk was admitted to the hospital on 6 September, lapsed into a coma, and died on Wednesday. The Belarusian bodybuilder, famous for his 6-foot, 340-pound physique, earned the nickname "The Mutant" in bodybuilding circles. Yefimchyk maintained impressive 25-inch biceps through a strict regimen that included consuming up to 16,500 calories daily, featuring over five pounds of steak and more than 100 pieces of sushi across seven meals. Though he never competed in professional bodybuilding events, he gained a substantial following by sharing his training routines online. *—Agencies*

One shot at pro-Israel rally in Boston

NEWTON, 13 SEPT

A pro-Israel rally in a Boston suburb turned violent on Thursday evening when a passerby was shot during a scuffle after confronting a group of demonstrators, authorities said. Police were called at 6.40pm to the scene of what they described as a small rally in Newton. Words were exchanged before a passerby rapidly crossed the street and tackled one of the demonstrators, Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan said. "A scuffle ensued. During that scuffle, the individual who had come across the street was shot by a member of the demonstrating group," Ryan said. Scott Hayes, 47, of Framingham, was arrested on charges of assault and battery with weapon and violation of a constitutional right causing injury. *—AP*

Africa's Indian origin ex-minister dies at 75

JOHANNESBURG, 13 SEPT

Pravin Gordhan, a veteran Indian-origin South African politician and anti-apartheid activist, died at a hospital here on Friday after a brief battle with cancer, his family said. Gordhan, 75, had been in South African politics since 1994 when the country was transitioning to democracy. Barely four months ago, he had announced that he was retiring from active politics to spend more time with his family. The former Cabinet minister died early Friday in hospital after "a short, courageous battle with cancer", his family said in a statement. In 2010, Gordhan received the Pravasi Bhartiya Award, India's highest honour for overseas Indians, from then-President Pratibha Patil. *—AP*

Former Miss Swiss finalist murdered, pureed in blender

BERN, 13 SEPT

Kristina Joksimovic, 38 a former Miss Switzerland finalist, was brutally murdered by her husband in Binningen, near Basel, Switzerland. She was allegedly strangled and dismembered by her spouse, who then attempted to cover up the crime by 'pureeing' her body parts in a blender and dissolving them in acid. The incident came to light in February when Joksimovic's dismembered body was discovered. Authorities said that she had been strangled before being mutilated. Her husband, referred to in the media as "Thomas", has since admitted to the murder. Thomas dismembered his wife's body using a jigsaw, knife, and garden shears. Afterward, he used a hand blender to "puree" the remains and dissolve parts in a chemical solution. *—AP*

US approves $165M in weapons sales to Israel

Earlier, US announced $20B weapons aid including F-15 jets

WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

The US has approved USD165 million in weapons sales to Israel to fund heavy-duty tank trailers, the State Department announced Thursday.

The systems include spare and repair parts, tool kits and technical and logistics support. They are not expected to be delivered until 2027.

Earlier this year, the US announced a mammoth USD20 billion weapons support package for Israel to include F-15 fighter jets. Like the tank trailers, those systems will not be delivered for several years and will not affect current Israeli military operations amid the 11-month-old war with Hamas in Gaza, which was sparked by the terror group's 7 October onslaught in which some 1,200 people were killed and 251 hostages were taken.

Relatives and friends of hostages held in the Gaza Strip by the Hamas block a road demanding their release in Tel Aviv on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

The Biden administration has had to balance its continued support for Israel with a growing number of calls from lawmakers and the public to curb military support there due to the number of civilian deaths in Gaza.

It has curbed one delivery of 2,000-pound bombs, citing concerns they could be used in densely populated civilian areas in Gaza.

According to the Hamas-run Gaza health ministry, more than 41,000 people in the Strip have been killed or are presumed dead in the fighting so far, though the toll cannot be verified and does not differentiate between civilians and fighters. Israel says it has killed some 17,000 combatants in battle and another 1,000 terrorists inside Israel on 7 October. Israel has said it seeks to minimize civilian fatalities and stresses that Hamas uses Gaza's civilians as human shields, fighting from civilian areas including homes, hospitals, schools, and mosques. Israel's toll in the ground offensive against Hamas in Gaza and in military operations along the border with the Strip stands at 344. *—Agencies*

TYPHOON YAGI

Rescue workers search for the missing after a flash flood buries a hamlet in mud and debris in the aftermath of Typhoon Yagi in Lao Cai province, Vietna. The death toll climbed to 233 on Friday as rescue workers recovered more bodies from areas hit by landslides and flash floods, state media reported *PHOTO: PTI*

Fake video targeting France, UAE likely Russian

DUBAI, 13 SEPT

A fake video that ricocheted across the internet claiming tensions between France and the United Arab Emirates after Telegram CEO Pavel Durov's detention in Paris likely came from Russia, an analysis by The Associated Press shows, despite Moscow's efforts to maintain crucial ties to the UAE.

The fake video began circulating online 27 August, bearing the logos of the Qatar-based satellite news network Al Jazeera and attempting to copy the channel's style. It falsely claimed the Emirati government had halted a previously announced purchase of 80 Rafale fighter jets from France worth USD 18 billion at the time, the largest-ever French weapons contract for export. *—AP*

ONE PAK ENTITY INCLUDED

US sanctions Chinese firms for Pak missile inputs

WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

The US has taken action against four Chinese entities, one Pakistani company, and one Chinese individual for their supply to Pakistan's ballistic missile programme under the missile sanctions laws, a State Department statement has said.

State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller in a statement on Thursday said the US imposed sanctions on the Beijing Research Institute of Automation for Machine Building Industry (RIAMB), which has worked with Pakistan's National Development Complex (NDC), under the missile sanctions laws (the Arms Export Control Act [AECA] and the Export Control Reform Act [ECRA]).

The statement said the Beijing Research Institute had worked with NDC in the development and production of Pakistan's long-range ballistic missiles to procure equipment for testing of large-diameter rocket motors, including the Shaheen-3 and Ababeel.

"The United States is [also] imposing sanctions on three PRC-based entities, one PRC individual, and a Pakistani entity for ballistic missile proliferation activities: PRC-based firms Hubei Huachangda Intelligent Equipment Company, Universal Enterprise Limited, and Xi'an Longde Technology Development Company Limited (aka Lontek); and PRC individual Luo Dongmei (aka Steed Luo) for knowingly transferring equipment and technology controlled under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) Annex, in support of MTCR Category I missile programmes, to a non-MTCR country," the statement said.

The statement said the department also imposed sanctions on a Pakistan-based entity Innovative Equipment under the missile sanctions laws. *—PTI*

- The statement said the department also imposed sanctions on a Pakistan-based entity Innovative Equipment under the missile sanctions laws

Musk calls Aus 'fascists' on online regulations

WASHONGTON DC, 13 SEPT

Space X CEO Elon Musk has called the Australian government "fascists" over new legislation aimed at tackling deliberate lies spread on social media.

Social media companies could be fined up to 5 per cent of their annual turnover under the commonwealth's proposed laws.

Musk, the US billionaire who owns the social media platform X, formerly Twitter, responded to a post about Australia's measures with one word.

Meanwhile, Vivian Wilson, Musk's daughter, publicly slammed him and called him a "heinous incel" in a new TikTok video following a bizarre comment he made toward pop star Taylor Swift. *—AP*

Russia to expel six British diplomats it accuses of spying

MOSCOW, 13 SEPT

Russia's Federal Security Service on Friday accused six British diplomats of spying and said a decision has been made to withdraw their accreditation.

Russian state TV quoted an official from the security service known as the FSB as saying that they will be expelled. The expulsions come as Prime Minister Keir Starmer visits Washington for talks with President Joe Biden that will include Ukraine's request to use Western-supplied weapons against targets inside Russia.

Starmer said on his way to the US that Britain does not "seek any conflict with Russia".

"Russia started this conflict. Russia illegally invaded Ukraine. Russia could end this conflict straight away," he told reporters.

"Ukraine has the right to self-defense and we've obviously been absolutely fully supportive of Ukraine's right to self-defense — we're providing training capability, as you know. But we don't seek any conflict with Russia — that's not our intention in the slightest," he said.

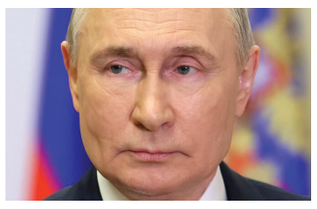


PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The FSB said it received documents indicating that the diplomats were sent to Russia by a division of the UK Foreign Office "whose main task is to inflict a strategic defeat on our country", and that they were involved in "intelligence-gathering and subversive activities".

Russian state TV said in a report that the six diplomats had met with independent media and rights groups that have been declared "foreign agents" — a label the Russian authorities have actively used against organizations and individuals critical of the Kremlin. The British Embassy in Moscow did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press. *—AP*

US, British meet on arm restrictions

Washington, 13 Sept

US President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer are meeting Friday amid an intensified push by Ukraine to loosen restrictions on using weapons provided by the US and Britain to strike Russia. The talks come amid signs that the White House could be moving toward a shift in its policy. Ukrainian officials renewed their pleas to use Western-provided long-range missiles against targets deeper inside Russia. *—AP*

TRUMP- KAMALA FACE OFF

There will be no third debate, says Trump

WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

Donald Trump on Thursday ruled out another presidential debate against Kamala Harris as her campaign announced a massive fundraising haul in the hours after the two candidates met on stage.

Trump, the Republican nominee, posted on Truth Social that "THERE WILL BE NO THIRD DEBATE!" following Tuesday's debate against Harris and his June debate against President Joe Biden. In rejecting another debate, the former president suggested that a "prizefighter" who loses a bout is always the one to call for a rematch.

A day earlier, he had said, "I just don't know," to the question of whether he would meet Harris for another debate.

While he could still change his mind, his announcement means that Tuesday's meeting will likely be the only time voters will see the two debate each other before the November election. More than 67 million people watched the Trump-Harris debate.

Meanwhile, the Justice Department is preparing criminal charges in connection with an Iranian hack that targeted Donald Trump's presidential campaign, two people familiar with the matter said Thursday.

Donald Trump *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

It was not immediately clear when the charges might be announced or whom precisely they will target, but they would be the result of an FBI investigation into an intrusion that investigators across multiple agencies quickly linked to an Iranian effort to influence this year's US presidential election.

The prospect of criminal charges comes as the Justice Department has warned about countries including Russia and China seeking to meddle in the presidential election. *—AP*

14 Shiites killed in Afghanistan's deadliest attack

ISTANBUL, 13 SEPT

Gunmen killed 14 people in a Shiite-majority area in central Afghanistan, the Taliban said on Friday, in one of the deadliest attacks in the country this year. Six other people were wounded in the assault.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility before the Taliban acknowledged the shootings, which took place on Thursday and targeted Hazara Shiite people as they travelled between the provinces of Ghor and Daikundi.

A machine gun was used in the assault, the IS group said. It gave a higher death toll than the Taliban.

The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani as saying the group had targeted people welcoming Afghan Shiites who were returning from visiting shrines in Iraq. He called for immediate action to punish those behind the crime.

The IS group's affiliate in the country, a major rival to the Taliban, has challenged authorities' grip on domestic security by attacking schools, hospitals, mosques and Shiite areas in the past three years. *—AP*

BANNED URANIUM

N Korea releases pics of Kim in nuclear facility

SEOUL, 13 SEPT

North Korea offered a rare glimpse into a secretive facility to produce weapons-grade uranium as state media reported Friday that leader Kim Jong Un visited the area and called for stronger efforts to "exponentially" increase the number of his nuclear weapons.

It's unclear if the site is at the North's main Yongbyon nuclear complex, but it's the North's first disclosure of a uranium-enrichment facility since it showed one at Yongbyon to visiting American scholars in 2010. While the latest unveiling is likely an attempt to apply more pressure on the US and its allies, the images North Korea's media released of the area could provide outsiders with a valuable source of information for estimating the amount of nuclear ingredients that North Korea has produced.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un tours facilities at the production base of weapon-grade nuclear materials in North Korea *PHOTO: PTI*

During a visit to the Nuclear Weapons Institute and the production base of weapon-grade nuclear materials, Kim expressed "great satisfaction repeatedly over the wonderful technical force of the nuclear power field" held by North Korea, the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

Kim said North Korea needs greater defence and pre-emptive attack capabilities because "anti-(North Korea) nuclear threats perpetrated by the US imperialists-led vassal forces have become more undisguised and crossed the red-line," KCNA said.

South Korea's Unification Ministry said it strongly condemned North Korea's unveiling of a uranium-enrichment facility and Kim's vows to boost his country's nuclear capability. *—AP*

China raises retirement age to tackle population woes

BEIJING, 13 SEPT

China starting next year will raise its retirement age for workers, which is now among the youngest in the world's major economies.

The extension was considered long overdue in a country facing a shrinking population and an aging work force.

The policy change will be carried out over 15 years, with the retirement age for men raised to 63 years, and 55 and 58 years for women depending on their jobs. The current retirement age is 60 for men, and 50 for women in blue-collar jobs and 55 for women in white-collar jobs.

The policy will be implemented starting in January next year, according to the announcement from China's legislature reported by state broadcaster CCTV.

"We have more people coming into the retirement age, and so the pension fund is (facing) high pressure, that's why I think it's now time to act seriously," said Xiujian Peng, a senior research fellow at Victoria University. For example, a man born in January 1971 could retire at the age of 61 years and 7 months in August 2032, according to the chart released along with the policy. A man born in May 1971 could retire at the age of 61 years and 8 months in January of 2033. *—AP*

- A man born in January 1971 could retire at the age of 61 years and 7 months in August 2032, according to the chart released along with the policy

PHOTO: ANI

Gold rebounds by ₹ 1,200 to reclaim 2-month high

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Gold prices bounced by Rs 1,200 to hit nearly a two-month high le vel of Rs 75,550 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, tracking a buying rush in domestic markets by jewellers amid a firm global trends. The precious metal had closed at Rs 74,350 per 10 grams on Thursday. Extending its gains for the fourth straight session, silver prices also rallied by Rs 2,000 to Rs 89,000 per kilogram on increased offtake by industrial units and coin makers, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The white metal had finished at Rs 87,000 per kg in the previous close on Thursday. In the past four sessions, the metal has surged Rs 5,200 per kg. —*PTI*

Rupee rises 6 paise to close at 83.90 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 13 SEPT

The rupee witnessed range-bound trade and settled for the day higher by 6 paise at 83.90 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday supported by weakening of the American currency in the overseas market and significant foreign fund inflows.

Forex traders said rupee trade was range-bound as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is maintaining a firm grip on the domestic currency. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.92 and witnessed an intraday high of 83.85 and a low of 83.98 against the American currency. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 83.90 (provisional), higher by 6 paise. —*PTI*

Max healthcare acquires 64% stake in Jaypee healthcare

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Max Healthcare on Friday announced the acquisition of a 64 per cent stake in the Jaypee Healthcare, the company informed the exchange in a filing on Friday. The company also proposed to acquire the remaining stake of around 36 per cent through option agreement. Max Healthcare stated that it entered a strategic collaboration with Lakshdeep Group, the promoter of Jaypee Healthcare Ltd. (JHL), to acquire a controlling stake in JHL, which is currently undergoing the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP). Under the agreement, Max will acquire the 64 per cent stake of Jaypee at the enterprise value of Rs 1660 crore. Jaypee Healthcare reported revenues of Rs 421 crore and an EBITDA of Rs 70 crore in the 2023-24 fiscal year. The transaction is expected to be completed within the next 30 days. —*ANI*

ICAR introduces new app for ornamental fishery

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA) has developed a mobile app 'Rangeen Machhli' for providing crucial information about ornamental fisheries to fish farmers and aquarium shop owners. On Thursday, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the 'Rangeen Machhli' mobile app at ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar. The 'Rangeen Machhli' app provides multi-lingual information on popular ornamental fish species in eight Indian languages, making it accessible to a wide audience. One of its key features is the "Find Aquarium Shops" tool, which allows users to locate nearby aquarium shops through a dynamic directory updated by shop owners, promoting local businesses and connecting users with reliable sources for ornamental fish . —*PTI*

FORD RETURNS TO INDIA AFTER 2 YEARS

Amid TN CM's US visit, Ford will roll out its exports in Chennai manufacturing plant

CHENNAI, 13 SEPT

American auto major Ford Motor on Friday said it is preparing to utilise its Chennai manufacturing plant to roll out vehicles for exports and has intimated the same to the Tamil Nadu government.

Minister for TRB Rajaa, who is in the United States accompanying the Chief Minister MK Stalin to woo investors, said the efforts of the Chief Minister to reposition 'Brand Tamil Nadu' in its Numero Uno place has yielded rich dividends.

The comments by Rajaa follows the decision by the US car maker Ford which earlier in the day said that it was preparing to utilise its Chennai manufacturing plant in Maraimalai Nagar to roll out vehicles for exports and has intimated its intention to the state government through a 'Letter of Intent'.

The company had stopped manufacturing of its products after nearly three decades
PHOTO: @FORDINDIA.COM

Rajaa also shared an video of his earlier visit to the factory of Ford in the United States where the car maker produces F150 at its Dearborn Manufacturing unit.

Recently, Chief Minister Stalin met the senior management of Ford Motor Company and said he had a engaging discussion with the team from Ford Motors and explored the feasibility of renewing Ford's three decade partnership with Tamil Nadu.

Earlier today, Ford said it has submitted a Letter of Intent to the Tamil Nadu government, indicating its intention to utilize the Chennai plant in Maraimalai Nagar in Chengalpattu district, located about 45 km from here, to serve overseas markets.

The company had stopped manufacturing of its products in September 2021, after nearly three decades, and said it would sell only imported vehicles going ahead as part of the restructuring exercise. Ford currently operates a Global Business Centre in the city, employing about 12,000 people which is expected to grow by 2,500 to 3,000 within the next three years. —*PTI*

Stalin signs ₹ 7,000 cr pact on last day in US

CHENNAI, 13 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Tamil Nadu government on Friday said it has signed an MoU with US-headquarterd Rapid Global Business Solutions, Inc, a supplier of business solutions across various industries, and the firm would set up a new unit in the state by investing Rs 100 crore.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister M K Stalin in Chicago on September 12 between officials of the state and the company, represented by its Chairman and CEO Nanua Singh and others, an official release here said, adding the new electronic and telematics firm would come up at Hosur. Industries Minister TRB Rajaa and top state officials were present. In total, the state government has inked pacts totally worth Rs 7,616 crore with 18 companies during the Chief Minister's official US tour to attract investments. —*PTI*

Market settles marginally lower in volatile trade

MUMBAI, 13 SEPT

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty took a breather on Friday after a record rally in the previous session and ended marginally lower on the emergence of profit-taking.

In a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 71.77 points or 0.09 per cent to close at 82,890.94. During the day, it dived 309.49 points or 0.37 per cent to 82,653.22.

The NSE Nifty dropped 32.40 points or 0.13 per cent to 25,356.50.

Adani Ports was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, declining 1.37 per cent, followed by ITC, Bharti Airtel, NTPC, Maruti, Asian Paints, Sun Pharma, Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever and Larsen & Toubro.

In contrast, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank, Tata Steel, Axis Bank and Tech Mahindra were among the gainers.

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Shanghai settled lower, while Seoul and Hong Kong ended in positive territory.

Adani Ports was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, declining 1.37 per cent, followed by ITC, Bharti Airtel
PHOTO: PTI

Retail inflation in August inched up to 3.65 per cent, though vegetables and pulses witnessed price rise in double digits, according to official data released on Thursday.

European markets were trading higher in the mid-session deals. The US markets ended with gains on Thursday. PTI Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 7,695 crore on Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.03 per cent to 72.71 a barrel. —*PTI*

ADDS 4.25% TO GDP

India's bioeconomy grew 9% to $151B

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

PHOTO: FREEPIK

India's bioeconomy has experienced significant growth, reaching a valuation of USD 151 billion by the end of 2023, according to a new report, which said that the surge highlights the bioeconomy's critical role in national development, contributing 4.25 per cent to the country's GDP and positioning India among the top five global bioeconomies.

The report, prepared by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) and the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE), outlines transformative advances across biotechnology, agricultural innovation, healthcare, and biomanufacturing, driving the sector's expansion.

It was released during a session at the Global Bio-India Summit 2024.

The report said that India's bioeconomy has experienced significant growth, reaching a valuation of USD 151 billion by the end of 2023.

One of the major drivers of this growth has been the BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment) Policy, the report said, noting that the policy focuses on bio-based chemicals, precision biotherapeutics, climate-resilient agriculture, and advanced research in marine and space technologies.

The Bioindustrial sector remains the largest contributor to India's bioeconomy, accounting for USD 72.6 billion or 48.09 per cent of the total market, report said.—*PTI*

Passenger vehicle wholesales dip 2% in August

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Domestic passenger vehicle wholesales declined by about 2 per cent year-on-year in August as companies curtailed dispatches to reduce inventory at dealers amid a drop in demand.

According to data issued by the industry body Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the total passenger vehicle dispatches in the domestic market stood at 3,52,921 units last month compared to 3,59,228 vehicles in August 2023, a dip of 1.8 per cent.

Two-wheeler wholesales rose 9 per cent to 17,11,662 units last month against 15,66,594 units in the year-ago period, it added.

Similarly, motorcycle dispatches from companies to dealers increased by 8 per cent to 10,60,866 units last month from 9,80,809 units in August 2023.

The total three-wheeler sales grew 8 per cent to 69,962 units last month against 64,944 units a year ago. —*PTI*

Anti-subsidy duty on Chinese chemical extended for 5 years

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

India has extended countervailing or anti-subsidy duty on a Chinese chemical used in pesticides for five more years to guard domestic players.

The decision followed a recommendation of the commerce ministry's investigation arm DGTR for continuation of the duty on the imports of 'Atrazine Technical' from China.

"The countervailing duty imposed under this notification shall be levied for a period of five years (unless revoked, superseded or amended earlier) from the date of publication of this notification," a finance ministry notification has said.

The finance ministry has imposed a duty of up to 11.94 per cent on the product.

In its probe, the DGTR had concluded that the current duties have allowed more Indian producers to enter the market and have helped the domestic industry to expand its capacity.

PHOTO: PTI

The subsidised exports were hurting Indian players. Earlier the revenue department had imposed the duty in September 2019.

Subsidised exports impact the price of that product in the importing country, hitting the margins and profits of manufacturing firms. According to global trade norms, a country is allowed to impose countervailing or anti-subsidy duties on such imports.

The ministry has also extended anti-subsidy duty on imports of welded stainless steel pipes and tubes from China and Vietnam for five years. —*PTI*

NCLAT ISSUES NOTICE TO IIHL ON RCAP'S PLEA

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

NCLAT on Friday issued a notice to IndusInd International Holdings Ltd (IIHL) over a plea filed by lenders of Reliance Capital seeking interest on the payment for the extended period.

A three-member bench led by Chairperson Justice Ashok Bhushan directed the Hinduja Group firm, IIHL to file reply within two weeks.

National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was hearing the petition from Committee of Creditors (CoC) of RCap.

It has requested the appellate tribunal to direct IIHL to "allow interest on the Upfront Cash Amount till August 8, 2024" and also " allow interest on debt component of Upfront Cash Amount from August 8, 2024 till Transfer Date which is the date of payment of Upfront Cash Amount" of Rs 9,660 crore.

NCLT-Mumbai on 27 February, 2024, approved IIHL's Rs 9,861-crore resolution plan for the debt-ridden financial firm. —*PTI*

FSSAI starts special drive to check adulteration during festive season

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has initiated a special drive to ensure the safety and quality of food items during the festive season.

As per the official statement by FSSAI, it has instructed Food Safety Officers and Designated Officers across the country to maintain strict surveillance over the manufacturing and sale of sweets, savouries, and dairy products such as milk, ghee, khoya, and paneer products within their respective jurisdictions. This step aims to prevent adulteration practices that could compromise the health of consumers.

On the rising demand of products during festive season, FSSAI said "In such a scenario, the preventive actions, including carrying out special surveillance / enforcement drives by the Food Safety Officers / Designated Officers, especially at hot spots of such practices under their respective jurisdictions, can be an effective tool to curb such practices while ensuring safety of such products."

Officers across the country to maintain strict surveillance over the manufacturing and sale of sweets, savouries, and dairy products
PHOTO: X

As part of the initiative, FSSAI has also urged state and local authorities to conduct frequent enforcement and surveillance drives, focussing on hotspots where such malpractices are more likely to occur.

- Every year as the country enters the festive season, the demand for sweets, savouries, and dairy products such as milk, ghee, khoya, and paneer witness a significant surge

Every year as the country enters the festive season, the demand for sweets, savouries, and dairy products such as milk, ghee, khoya, and paneer witness a significant surge. However, with this rise in demand, there is also an increased risk of adulteration in these products as manufacturers strive to meet consumer needs. —*ANI*

OFFER TURNED DOWN

33,000 Boeing workers go on strike

SEATTLE, 13 SEPT

Aircraft assembly workers walked off the job early Friday at Boeing factories near Seattle and elsewhere after union members voted overwhelmingly to go on strike and reject a tentative contract that would increased wages by 25 per cent over four years.

The strike started at 12.01am. PDT, less than three hours after the local branch of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers announced 94.6 per cent of voting workers rejected the proposed contract and 96 per cent approved the work stoppage, easily surpassing a two-thirds requirement.

The labour action involves 33,000 Boeing machinists, most of them in Washington state, and is expected to shut down production of the company's best-selling airline planes. The strike will not affect commercial flights but represents another setback for the aerospace giant, whose reputation and finances have been battered by manufacturing problems and multiple federal investigations this year.

The Union workers also wanted to restore traditional pensions that were axed a decade ago
PHOTO: PTI

The striking machinists assemble the 737 Max, Boeing's best-selling airliner, along with the 777, or "triple-seven" jet, and the 767 cargo plane at factories in Renton and Everett, Washington. The walkout likely will not stop production of Boeing 787 Dreamliners, which are built by workers in South Carolina.

Outside the Renton factory, people stood with signs reading, "Historic contract my ass" and "Have you seen the damn housing prices?" Car horns honked and a boom box played songs such as Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It" and Taylor Swift's "Look What You Made Me Do."

However, the deal fell short of the union's initial demand for pay raises of 40 per cent over three years. The union also wanted to restore traditional pensions that were axed a decade ago but settled for an increase in new Boeing contributions of up to USD 4,160 per worker to employee 401(k) retirement accounts. —*PTI*

Amazon hikes wages for contract delivery drivers

WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

Amazon is giving another pay boost to its subcontracted delivery drivers in the US amid growing union pressure.

Drivers who work with Amazon's Delivery Service Partners, or DSPs, will earn an average of nearly $22 per hour, a 7 per cent bump from the previous average of $20.50, the company said Thursday.

The increase in wages is part of a new $2.1 billion investment the online retailer is making in the delivery program. Amazon doesn't directly employ drivers but relies on thousands of third-party businesses that deliver millions of customer packages every day.

Amazon said the DSP program has created 390,000 driving jobs since 2018 and its total investments of $12 billion since then will help with safety programs and provide incentives for participating businesses.

Last week, a National Labor Board prosecutor in Atlanta determined Amazon should be held jointly liable for allegedly making threats and other unlawful statements to DSP drivers seeking to unionize in the city. Meanwhile, NLRB prosecutors in Los Angeles determined last month that Amazon was a joint employer of subcontracted drivers who delivered packages for the company in California.

If a settlement is not reached in those cases, the agency could choose to bring a complaint against Amazon, which would be litigated within the NLRB's administrative law system. Amazon has the option to appeal a judge's order to the agency's board and eventually, to a federal court. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Rafael Nadal withdraws from Laver Cup in Berlin

BERLIN, 13 SEPT

Rafael Nadal withdrew Thursday from next week's Laver Cup in Berlin, leaving it unclear when the Spanish great will play again. The Laver Cup the tournament where Roger Federer retired in 2022 after teaming up with Nadal in doubles would have been Nadal's first event since the Paris Olympics and potentially one of his last ever. "I'm disappointed to share that I won't be able to compete at the Laver Cup in Berlin next week," the 38-year-old Nadal said. "This is a team competition and to support Team Europe, I need to do what's best for them and at this moment there are other players who can help the team deliver the win."—*PTI*

India relies on Balaji to win Davis Cup

STOCKHOLM, 13 SEPT

For the second consecutive Davis Cup tie, India is relying on doubles specialist N Sriram Balaji to do the singles duty with captain Rohit Rajpal on Friday decided to play him on the opening day of the World Group I contest against Sweden along with Ramkumar. Balaji, who competed in singles in Pakistan early this year on the grass court, will open the indoor tie with a match against Swedish number-one player Elias Ymer (ranked 238) on Saturday. India's number one Ramkumar (ranked 332) will take on Leo Borg (ranked 603), the son of legendary Swede Bjorn Borg in the second singles. They have not played against each other before on the ATP Tour. Ramkumar and Balaji will also play the doubles on Sunday against Filip Bergevi and Andre. —*PTI*

Lipsky shoots 65 to take 1st-round lead at Silverado

NAPA, 13 SEPT

David Lipsky shot a 7-under 65 on Thursday at Silverado Country Club to take a one-stroke lead after the first round of the Procore Championship. Winless in 104 events since joining the PGA Tour in 2022, Lipsky went out with the early groups and had eight birdies with one bogey to kick off the FedEx Cup Fall series at the picturesque course in the heart of Napa Valley wine country. After missing the cut in his three previous tournaments, Lipsky flew from Las Vegas to Arizona to reunite with his college coach at Northwestern to get his focus back. He also spent time playing with some of the Northwestern players, which helped him relax. "Just being around those guys and seeing how carefree they are, not knowing what's coming for them yet. —*PTI*

Agarwal and Pratam give India A an edge

Devdutt makes 92 for India D in Duleep Trophy

ANANTAPUR, 13 SEPT

Half-centuries by skipper Mayank Agarwal and Pratam Singh helped India A reach 115 for one in their second innings and extend their hold over India D after the second day's play of the Duleep Trophy here on Friday.

India A, who made 290 in their first innings, earlier bowled out their opponents for 183 despite India batter Devdutt Padikkal's valiant 92 to gain a lead of 107 runs.Now, India A has an advantage of 222 runs, with Agarwal (56, 87b, 8x4) and Pratham (59 batting, 82b, 6x4) leading their run glut in the second innings. However, Agarwal, who is eager to chart his way back into the selectorial reckoning, will be kicking himself for falling on the last ball of the day to part-time spinner Shreyas Iyer, spooning a simple return catch.

However, that's just one part of India A's story of domination on the day as earlier pacers Khaleel Ahmed and Aaqib Khan bagged three wickets apiece to rattle the India D line-up.Only one of their batters defied the constant challenge of judgement – Devdutt who stroked his way to a 124-ball 92 with 15 hits to the ropes.

The Karnataka left-hander who made his Test debut earlier this year against England was particularly harsh on any offering on his pads or away from the off-stump.

India A bowler Khaleel Ahmed in Duleep Trophy match PHOTO: PTI

A century was there for his taking, but the 24-year-old fell just eight runs shy as his attempt to play a shot on the up off state-mate Prasidh Krishna ended up in a simple catch to stumper Kumar Kushagra.

The 11-4-30-1 figures do not fall under the hallow-spell category, but for Prasidh it was important in his comeback journey.This was the pacer's first outing in competitive cricket since Karnataka's Ranji Trophy game against Gujarat in January this year. Since that match, the 28-year-old was recuperating from a quadricep injury.Harshit Rana made 31 off 29 balls, including two back-to-back sixes off left-arm spinner Shams Mulani, but his effort was not enough for India D to close the gap with their rivals. However, Rana can take a slice of comfort as he completed a four-wicket haul in the opening session of the day to bowl out India A for 290 in their first dig.India A were resuming from their overnight 288 for eight but lost Mulani and Aaqib to Rana who ended up with 4 for 51.

Brief scores: India A: 290 all out and 115/1 in 28.1 overs (Mayank Agarwal 56, Pritam Singh 59 batting) vs India D: 183 all out in 52.1 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 92, Harshit Rana 31; Khaleel Ahmed 3/39, Aaqib Khan 3/41). —*PTI*

N Jagadeesan fights back to revive India B

ANANTAPUR, 13 SEPT

India B were 124 for no-loss at stumps as the openers N Jagadeesan and Abhimanyu Easwaran brought up their respective fifties, and a 100-run partnership as well. 292 runs were scored in 81.1 overs on Day 2 while only five wickets fell.

Carrying on from where they left overnight, India C continued to pile on the runs. Skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad brought up his fifty but was bowled soon after. He was castled by Mukesh Kumar, who had picked up his fourth wicket of the innings. India C's tail did not go down without a fight which wiped off any hope that India B had of wrapping up the innings quickly.Suthar and Mayank Markande ensured that India C went past the 400-run mark before the latter was bowled by Nitish Reddy. Anshul Kamboj then put on a quick 55-run stand with Suthar in just above 10 overs.

Brief Scores:
India B 124/0 (N Jagadeesan 67*, Abhimanyu Easwaran 51*) trail India C 525 (Ishan Kishan 111, Manav Suthar 82, Baba Indrajith 78; Rahul Chahar 4-73, Mukesh Kumar 4-126) by 401 runs. —*PTI*

N Jagadeesan PHOTO: TWITTER

It was the first time that a Test was abandoned without any play at an Indian venue PHOTO: PTI

Afghan vs NZ Test match washed out due to heavy rains

GREATER NOIDA, 13 SEPT

The one-off Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand was called off on Friday without a ball being bowled owing to incessant rain here, making it only the eighth instance of a match being abandoned in such a manner in the history of five-day games.

It was the first time that a Test was abandoned without any play at an Indian venue.

The first two days of the game were canceled because of a wet outfield, raising significant concerns about the preparedness of the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex. The remaining three days were then washed out due to persistent rain.

An inspection was held on Friday morning but with puddles still present on the uncovered parts of the outfield, it was a foregone conclusion that the match would be abandoned without even the toss taking place. "It is still raining in Greater Noida and due to frequent rains, the 5th and final day of the Afghanistan vs New Zealand Test has been called off by the match officials," the Afghanistan Cricket Board said in a statement. Only seven matches in the history of Test cricket have been abandoned without a ball being bowled dating back to 1890. The last time it happened was almost 26 years ago, in 1998.

In the same year and on the same day, a Pakistan-Zimbabwe Test in Faisalabad was also called off without any play owing to thick winter fog.

The mid-wicket area was a particular concern. To address the issue, groundsmen brought in dry sections of grass from the practice area to "transplant" in the mid-wicket zone. While the BCCI tried to assist by providing additional machinery and the Delhi Delhi & District Cricket Association and Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association helping out, it was a little too late. —*PTI*

Rohit and Kohli arrive in Chennai

CHENNAI, 13 SEPT

Rohit Sharma-led Indian cricket team is all set to take on Najmul Hossain Shanto's Bangladesh in a two-match Test series which is scheduled to start on September 19 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. This is India's first assignment since the 0-2 ODI series loss against Sri Lanka last month. This is also their first Test series since the five-match England series earlier this year. Ahead of the clash, star Indian batter Virat Kohli has arrived in Chennai.

Kohli was spotted at the Chennai airport, he arrived here from London where he has been in the recent time. Virat was wearing a white t-shirt and paired it with brown trousers and a matching hat. The video of his arrival in Chennai is creating a lot of buzz and the video is going viral all across social media at a rapid pace.

India's Head Coach Gauta Gambhir with players during a training session ahead of the first Test match against Bangladesh PHOTO: PTI

Virat had an underwhelming outing in the recently concluded Sri Lanka series. He could not even reach the 25-run mark in any of the three games. He could only score 24, 14, and 20 against the Lankan Lions. He last played a Test in January against South Africa and was unable to for the England series. He would be eager to get some runs from his bats ahead of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy later this year. He also has great numbers against Bangladesh. In 6 red-ball matches, he has amassed 437 runs with an average of 54.62. He also has two Test centuries against Bangladesh and one of them was a double ton. —*PTI*

ANWAR ALI'S SUSPENSION WITHDRAWN

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The Delhi High Court was on Friday told that the Players Status Committee of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) will withdraw its order suspending India defender Anwar Ali.

The lawyer appearing for AIFF submitted before Justice Sanjeev Narula that the issue would be considered afresh by the committee on Saturday and a "detailed order" would be passed after hearing the parties. —*PTI*

Vidhatri Urs PHOTO: WPGT

VIDHATRI WINS A 3RD TITLE IN 11TH LEG OF WPGT

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Vidhatri Urs handled the soggy conditions well to complete a hat-trick of wins as she emerged champion in the 11th leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Delhi Golf Club here on Friday.

Vidhatri, who won the ninth and 10th legs of the Tour, added a third title, scoring 1-under 35 on yet another day hit by inclement weather when the final round was reduced to nine holes.

The second round had also been reduced to nine holes because of the weather.

Vidhatri took no chances as she played smart golf in challenging conditions and parred the first seven holes before finding a birdie on the Par-5 eighth.

She parred the final hole to finish with 35 and scores of 67-34-35 for a total of 136 after 36 holes.

Hitaashee Bakshi, who has been in good form this season, also had one birdie and eight pars in her 9-hole round of 35. With 70-37 on the earlier two days, she totaled 142 and finished six shots behind the winner.

Sneha Singh had one birdie and one bogey in an even-par 36 and totaled 143 with 72-34-36. —*PTI*

Kothari to lead India's challenge in snooker WC

KOLKATA, 13 SEPT

Reigning National champion and No. 1 Sourav Kothari will spearhead India's challenge in the snooker World Cup to be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from Friday.

Kothari has also been given a wild card to the IBSF World 6 red snooker championship that will be held after the World Cup from September 21-25 at the same venue.

The other two Indians who will be in the fray are current India No. 2, Paras Gupta and Kamal Chawla.

More than 20 countries are expected to participate in these major championships of the World Snooker calendar over the next fortnight.

These are the first international individual snooker championships that Kothari will be participating in since becoming the national champion in December last year and having missed the Asian Snooker Championship in Doha earlier this year due to unavoidable circumstances.

A six-member Indian women's team will also take part in the championship. —*PTI*

Sourav Kothari PHOTO: TWITTER

ACT HOCKEY

Unbeaten India look to continue supremacy over Pak

HULUNBUIR, 13 SEPT

A semifinal berth already secured, unbeaten India will look to continue the winning run and supremacy over arch-rivals Pakistan in their last and most-awaited round-robin match of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy here on Saturday.

With four wins out of as many games, defending champions India are leading the points table, followed closely by Pakistan.

Starting the tournament as clear favorites, Paris Olympics bronze-medallists India haven't disappointed so far, beating hosts China 3-0, and Japan 5-1, trouncing Malaysia 8-1 before registering a 3-1 victory against Korea in their last match.

The Indian team will play arch-rivals Pakistan in their final round-robin match in the Asian Champions Trophy PHOTO: PTI

Pakistan, on the other hand, has been resilient in the campaign. Playing under the guidance of legendary forward Tahir Zaman, the Ammad Butt-led side has improved with every passing game.

Pakistan drew 2-2 against Malaysia and Korea, before beating Japan and China 2-1 and 5-1 respectively to climb to the second spot. Going by recent results, India enjoys an upper hand over Pakistan. In their last meeting at the Hangzhou Asian Games last year, India thrashed Pakistan 10-2. A few months before that, the Indians beat Pakistan 4-0 when the ACT was held in Chennai. —*PTI*

K'taka retains National Aquatic C'ships title

MANGALORE 13 SEPT

An eventful last day of the 77th Senior National Aquatic Championships 2024 ended with Karnataka being crowned champions again. They earned 17 Gold medals, 12 Silver medals, and four Bronze medals to clinch the title. Aneesh S Gowda, from Karnataka, was named the Individual Champion from the Men's category with four Gold medals, and Hashika Ramachandra, also from Karnataka, claimed the top spot among Women with three Golds and one Silver medal. The icing on the cake for Karnataka was the creation of a new record in the Men's 4x100m Freestyle. Prithvi M, Kartikeyan Nair, Akash Mani, and Srihari Nataraj combined to post 3:28.09 and better Karnataka's record of 3:28.16 from 2023. —*PTI*

ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2025

PCB allocates Rs 12.8B for stadiums renovation ahead of key matches

KARACHI, 13 SEPT

The Pakistan Cricket Board has allocated 12.8 billion rupees for the renovation of stadiums in Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi ahead of next year's ICC Champions Trophy, informed PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi.

In a briefing given at the Board of Governors meeting in Faisalabad, Naqvi assured that the three venues would be ready in time to host the marquee event.

Giving details of the fund distribution, Naqvi said 7.7 billion rupees out of 12.8 billion are being spent on the upgrade of the Gaddafi stadium in Lahore.

The allocated budget for Gaddafi Stadium involves 1,100 million rupees for the construction of a steel-structured pavilion, 3,471 million rupees for a concrete office building, 1,250 million rupees for the steel structure of the enclosure, 189 million rupees for a moat, and 330 million rupees for the replacement of two LED digital screens.

Mohsin Naqvi PHOTO: X/@MOHSINNAQVIC42

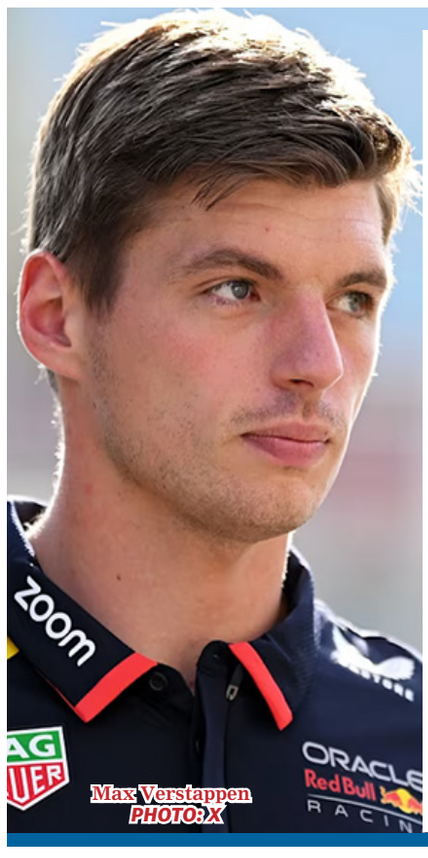
The board is also replacing floodlights with 480 LED lights at Gaddafi Stadium for 523 million rupees.

The PCB has earmarked 3.5 billion rupees for renovating the National Stadium in Karachi including the new construction.

This includes 1,500 million rupees for the steel structure of the pavilion building, 580 million rupees for renovating the main building and hospitality boxes, 330 million rupees for two new LED digital screens, 490 million rupees for replacing floodlights with 450 LED lights, and 340 million rupees for seat installation.

The construction work at Pindi Stadium is estimated to cost 1.5 billion rupees including 393 million rupees for replacing floodlights with 350 LED lights and 400 million rupees for renovating the main building, hospitality boxes, and restrooms.

Additionally, 330 million rupees have been allocated for replacing two LED digital screens, and 272 million rupees will be spent on new seating installations. —*PTI*



Verstappen has a monster to tame in Baku

BAKU, 13 SEPT

Lando Norris is only one of Max Verstappen's problems at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. The other is his car.

Verstappen needs to tame a car he's called a "monster" to hold off Norris and defend his Formula 1 title in Baku, all while the Red Bull team's years of dominance in Formula 1 seem to be nearing their end. Verstappen and Red Bull haven't won any of the last six races going into the Azerbaijan Grand Prix on Sunday.

Norris will now be favored by McLaren over teammate Oscar Piastri but will likely need some big slip-ups from Verstappen or Red Bull to overhaul the Dutch driver's 62-point lead in the last eight races of 2024,

The target is much closer in the constructor's standings, with the McLaren team just eight points behind Red Bull, so that lead could change hands in Azerbaijan on Sunday.

New rivals to Red Bull are emerging, powered by Red Bull's expertise. —*PTI*